

THE  
CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

[FROM THE LONDON EDITION.]

No. 193.]

JANUARY, 1818.

[No. 1. Vol. XVII.]

RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

For the Christian Observer.

CURSORY REMARKS ON UNITARIANISM, AND THE ARGUMENTS BY WHICH IT IS USUALLY SUPPORTED.

No. I.

THE arguments by which Unitarianism is usually supported have recently been embodied in a work of a cheap form and popular texture, entitled, "A plain View of the Unitarian Christian Doctrine, in a Series of Essays on the one God, the Father, and the Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus: with an Appendix, containing an Explanation of the principal Passages of Scripture, which are urged in Support of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and the Deity of Christ: and an Answer to the chief Objections of Trinitarians: by Richard Wright, Unitarian Missionary." When, in the dedication of this work, I learned that there exists a Unitarian fund and missionaries, a treasurer, and all the apparatus of a regular institution, actively engaged in disseminating Unitarian principles—principles which I, for one, conscientiously believe to be hostile to the Gospel of Christ, and fatal to the peace of the soul—I deemed it my duty to peruse with care some of the numerous publications which are employed in diffusing those principles throughout the land. Among these the work of Mr. Wright seemed to me to demand particular notice, being a comprehensive, and at the same time a temperate and popular work, calculated for extensive circulation, and easy to be understood. I therefore resolved

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to examine it minutely—and I now submit the result of that examination to the public, through the medium of the Christian Observer, in the hope that it may tend to confirm the faith of its readers, while it fortifies them with additional arguments for the defence of the truth; and that it may also prove instrumental, under the Divine blessing, in reclaiming some who may have been unhappily bewildered by the sophistical reasonings of this Unitarian missionary and his associates.

The work in question consists of a series of essays on subjects connected with the peculiar system of Unitarianism, most of which have been published separately, but which are now collected into a volume, so as to furnish, as the author says, "a view of the Unitarian doctrine, suited to the common sense and common leisure of mankind."

The first of these essays is on the use of reason in matters of religion; and the former half of it is devoted to disprove the monstrous position, that reason ought to be discarded in examining the truths of revelation; in which, consequently, I should see nothing to quarrel with, but for the application of it at the close of the following sentence:—"Most absurdly would that man be thought to act, who should call upon his fellow-creatures to shut their eyes that they might see objects aright; but not more absurdly than those who contend that reason, the eye of the mind, must be disused in judging of the truths of Revelation: yet such absurdity has too often disgraced the professors of Christianity."

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This writer has, indeed, observed with pain, something like an approximation to this absurdity, within these few years, among a certain class of Christians. These deluded persons, if I may venture so to call them, have certainly adopted, in many instances, a plan of interpreting Scripture, from which, as it appears to me, reason is in a great measure excluded; and for want of that guide, it cannot be expected that two persons of that class can long continue to interpret any one passage of Scripture alike, except by concert.

But as these are not the persons, to whom Mr. Wright wishes to apply his remark, so neither does it seem to me, that there are any other persons to whom it does apply.—Christian divines, in general, have laboured not to discard or even to depreciate reason; and when they speak against what they sometimes denominate “carnal reason,” they do not mean by that expression sound reason, or the principle of reason considered abstractedly and in itself, but reason under the influence of pride and self-conceit. The object of their labours is to assign to reason its proper office, which is to discern by the light of Revelation the eternal truths of God. “What the eye is to the body, reason or understanding is to the soul, as says the Apostle: ‘Having the eyes of your understanding, *τῆς διανοίας*, the faculty of discernment, enlightened.’ The eye then is framed in such a manner as to be capable of seeing; and reason in such a manner as to be capable of knowing.—But the eye, though ever so good, cannot see without light; and reason, though ever so perfect, cannot know without instruction. The eye, indeed, is that which sees; but the light is the cause of its seeing. Reason is that which knows; but instruction is the cause of its knowing: and it would be as absurd to make the eye give itself light, because it sees by the light, as to make reason in-

struct itself, because it knows by instruction.—The phrase, therefore, ‘light of reason,’ seems to be an improper one; since reason is not the light, but an organ for the light of instruction to act upon: and a man may as well take a view of things upon earth in a dark night by the light of his own eye, as pretend to discover the things of Heaven in the night of nature, by the light of his own reason: nor do we any more derogate from the perfection of reason when we affirm it cannot know without instruction, than we derogate from the perfection of the eye when we deny it has a power of seeing in the dark. Christ only, who is the Sun of Righteousness, has in him the perfection of light, even all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The perfection of reason is to be able to receive of his fulness, to receive the instruction of wisdom.”—Horne’s Apology for certain Gentlemen in the University of Oxford.

I have no hesitation, therefore, in agreeing with our author in his statement, that “if there be nothing in religion contrary to reason, nothing unreasonable, it follows that there is no subject in religion but what reason may be exercised upon.” Yet this conclusion he follows up by a remark, which, if I mistake not, is the beginning of my difference with him.

“Still,” says he, “we shall be told, that the Scriptures contain doctrines which are above reason.”

Here, then, I commence my inquiry, and proceed to investigate the arguments by which Mr. Wright seeks to invalidate the position, that the Scriptures contain doctrines which are above reason. This argument is as follows:—“What is above reason can be no part of revelation: for the word Revelation is only applicable to things which are made known; consequently, which are brought down to a level with our reason, and may be comprehended; as what is not brought on a level with



our rational powers, is no revelation to us. Did the Gospel really contain doctrines above reason, it would, so far, cease to be a Divine Revelation, and with such incomprehensible mysteries we shall have nothing to do; for secret things belong unto the Lord, and what is above our reason must necessarily be a secret to us, but revealed things belong to us and our children. We may safely conclude, that the Gospel, as it was preached to, and intended for, the poor, as it is a revelation to babes in knowledge, contains no mysterious and incomprehensible doctrines.—Still, it will be argued we must believe doctrines which we cannot understand. To this it is replied, The thing is impossible: we may assent to what we do not understand: we may say we believe it, but we cannot really believe it, because we know not what it is; for we cannot know what we do not understand; and if we say we believe what we do not understand, we in fact say we believe we know not what; and how, in that case, are we either to explain or give a reason for what we believe?"

When I first read this passage, I was inclined to produce my own experience, as evidence against the truth of it: for I undoubtedly believed, that the author had written it; and yet I could not pretend to understand it. But, to waive the benefit of this argument, which, however, appears to me somewhat in point, I would ask, What can be meant by that saying of St. Paul's, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part," if nothing in Scripture is revealed partially? Or whether, because all our knowledge is confessedly partial, we must, therefore, conclude that we have no knowledge at all, and the revelation which teaches it is no revelation? There is nothing in nature which we thoroughly understand. We believe in the intimate connexion and reciprocal influence

of our own souls and bodies: and yet we cannot understand it. We believe in magnetism, gravitation, and a hundred other properties (if they are properties) of particular bodies, none of which do we understand, and some of them it is perhaps impossible we should understand.—They are above or beyond our reason; and yet, not being contrary to any of its dictates or principles, are believed upon sufficient evidence, though not comprehended. It is, indeed, one thing to understand a truth, and another thing to comprehend the import of the terms in which it is told, or the relations in which they stand to each other. But we may assent to a truth, when we do not even comprehend the full meaning of the terms in which it is conveyed to us. Thus with respect to that fundamental truth, the being of a God, how many believe it; and yet how few have a correct idea of the God in whom they profess to believe! Indeed, the several attributes which go to make up the true notion of God, and still more the combination of them, are beyond human capacity. *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?* Even Mr. Wright, indeed, draws a distinction here.

"If a man should say he believes there is a God, but understands not how God exists; that he believes the dead will be raised, but he understands not how they will be raised; it will be easy to reply, that he does not believe how God exists, nor how the dead will be raised; that his faith is limited to the part of each subject which he understands; for he understands that God exists, and that the dead will be raised; and it extends not to the part of either subject of which he remains ignorant."

But, surely, to the complete understanding of the position—"There is a God"—a right apprehension of the idea of God is necessary; and if that right apprehension be impossible to

a finite capacity, we are reduced to the dilemma of either not believing that there is a God, or of believing what we do not understand. I am, however, satisfied with the distinction which the author draws on this occasion; and if he will allow me to extend to the doctrine of a Trinity what he has asserted concerning the Divine existence and the resurrection, I cannot perceive that, so far at least as the use of reason is concerned, there will be any disagreement between us. If a man should say he believes there is a Trinity, but understands not how the Trinity subsists, it will be easy to reply, that he does not believe how the Trinity subsists, but that his faith is limited to the part of the subject which he understands; for he understands simply, that God is a Trinity, and it extends not to the part of the subject of which he remains ignorant: and this, indeed, is apparently conceded by our author, in another part of his work, where he sets the question on its right footing.

"The dispute is not about the manner of the fact, but about the fact itself. The point at issue is, whether or not any such fact be revealed. The Trinitarian affirms, the Unitarian denies: the Scriptures must decide between them. If the former can convince us that the Scriptures teach the fact, this will satisfy us: we will not reject it, merely because we cannot comprehend the manner of it."

Still Mr. Wright maintains, in this place, that with incomprehensible mysteries we can have nothing to do. Yet certainly the self-existence, the omnipresence, the omniscience, the omnipotence of God, are subjects with which he would not say that we have no concern. They are tenets which he believes: and yet they are incomprehensible mysteries. Nevertheless, even these, if we adopt his principles, can be no part of revelation; for the word Revelation is

only applicable to things which are brought down to a level with our reason, and placed within our comprehension, which these can never be. There must, indeed, be many mysteries in infinity, which transcend our poor apprehensions; so that if a revelation of God were offered to our consideration, which contained in it nothing mysterious or surprising, that circumstance would afford a presumption not for but against its truth.

All scriptural revelation is addressed to us, as to reasonable beings; to those who, according to an admirable maxim of Paley, will not let the parts of a subject which they do not know interfere with their legitimate conclusions from those which they do. The poor, the illiterate, and the young, are able to make this discrimination; and, therefore, to them also is revelation addressed. They can apprehend the difference between those parts of a subject which are revealed, and those which, not being revealed, are probably undiscoverable; and up to this point, they can, with the light of revelation, and by the eye of reason, prove all things; "and, through Divine grace, hold fast that which is good." What they cannot do, and what was never designed for us to do, is to bring revealed truths to the test of reason. Of this maxim, our author indeed seems, in one place, to have obtained a glimpse: for he says, "Though I dare not set up my reason as a judge of what is fit for God to reveal, yet I am called to use it in judging of what he hath been pleased to reveal: believing him to be infinitely wise and good, I cannot think he hath revealed anything contrary to reason."

Reason is necessary to discern the truths of religion, and to distinguish them from the glosses of error and misinterpretation. But it can neither discover those truths nor subject them to any other just test but this, "Has God revealed them?" Nor is



there, in fact, any more reasonable course, that can be followed by our understandings, than, after we have once been persuaded of the immutable truth of God's character, to believe whatever doctrine he has revealed, upon the simple warrant of his word. No doctrine can possibly be irrational, which is fairly deduced by this process : for reason can teach nothing more certainly, than that the doctrines which God has revealed must be true.

What has been said above, concerning the competency of the poor and illiterate to receive a plain truth, notwithstanding the difficulties with which it may be surrounded, is, however, decidedly opposed in the following passages.

"The pure Gospel is distinguished by its simplicity, which adapts it to the capacity of the poor or unlearned. The notion of two natures in the person of Christ destroys this simplicity, and renders Christianity unintelligible, at least in what relates to the Person who introduced it.—Those who contend that Christ is God as well as man substitute in the place of a plain fact; that is, that Jesus of Nazareth is the anointed of God; the most inexplicable mystery, and make the declaration of the Saviour equivocal, if not self-contradictory."

"The unlettered Christian is not a little embarrassed in his views, and filled with perplexity of thought, by hearing insisted on, as essential doctrines of the Gospel, abstruse and metaphysical notions, of which he can form no rational idea, but which he is told he must believe, on pain of damnation."

There may be teachers who take this method of inculcating religious doctrines. But to the extent of my own observation, I may take up the author's distinction, and say, that the people are not required to believe how our blessed Saviour, being God, became man; or how two natures are

united in one person; any more than they are required to understand how a material and an immaterial essence can be united in their own.—But they are simply taught, that our blessed Lord, being in the form of God, took upon him the form of a servant; and that, in that form, he became our Redeemer by making an atonement for our sins, as he is now our Intercessor, and will hereafter be our Judge. The doctrine of a Trinity is involved in this statement, but not explained in it; and as to any abstruse or metaphysical notions, they are no more essential to our scheme than to others. All doctrines in physics or in theology involve abstruse and metaphysical notions in them, if persons are disposed to dwell on them. But the statement above given, if, like the great Being of whom it treats, it be infinitely above our understanding, speaks intelligibly enough to the heart, and offers motives to gratitude and godly fear, into which even the poor and illiterate may well enter, and which the "poor in spirit" will be sure to entertain: nor have I any doubt, that the pain of damnation is annexed to a rejection of it, so far as it is scriptural, and with good reason; for if it be true, the rejection of it cannot amount to less than to a rejection of a Saviour in that only character in which he is offered to us, and therewith of all the benefits which he conveys.

If, indeed, the doctrines, to which I have alluded, were incapable of being received by the poor, because of the mysteriousness which belongs to them, such a fact would be a presumption against their being the doctrines of Scripture; for the Gospel, which is particularly preached to the poor, must also be adapted to their capacities. But that we are not to infer from the Gospel being preached to the poor, that there is no mystery in it, is evident from our Lord's words, in Mark iv. 11; "Unto you

it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God. But unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables." This declaration was made to the Apostles, who were the poorest of men, except their Master: and in it we have a plain declaration, that the kingdom of God is a mystery, which is hid from many, not indeed from the poor, as such, but from the worldly and the wicked. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," (said our blessed Saviour,) "because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) See also Rom. xvi. 25, 26; 1 Cor. ii. 7; Eph. i. 8, 9; vi. 19; Col. i. 25, 26, 27. iv. 3; and 1 Tim. iii. 16. In truth, a fact is not the less simple for being mysterious. The miracle of turning water into wine is mysterious.—Yet no fact could be more simple.—The belief of simple facts, moreover, requires no learning, though the explanation of them would often baffle the greatest: nor, in point of fact, do we perceive that the poor have any greater difficulty in apprehending what we mean, when we say, that he who was God took upon him the nature of man, than their more educated neighbours. But, when they not only apprehend this doctrine, but believe it too, I imagine they will more readily both feel and understand, at first hearing, what is meant by the saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, than they could be made to do, after the fullest explanation, without any such belief to co-operate with it.

If, then, an incarnation, and the other facts connected with that im-

portant doctrine, be not impossible, it remains only to inquire, whether they have been clearly revealed: and previously to the determination of this problem, I have some remarks to offer on the manner in which the author sets about the inquiry. With this view I cite the following passage.

"As in every science, so also in religion, there are plain and simple facts, or clear and evident truths, which may be taken as grounds of reasoning, inference, and conclusion, and to the test of which should be brought things less plain and manifest. Such obvious facts, and evident truths, we call first principles."

In physics, metaphysics, and every other department of philosophy, we know nothing but what we can discover. Our knowledge, therefore, on these subjects, can never exceed our proofs; and the validity of our proofs must depend on their connexion or variance with admitted first principles. But in religion we have nothing to discover. It is from first to last a revelation. We must not add thereto, nor diminish from it; but receive every truth that is plainly revealed, one as well as another; and the question in this case is not concerning principles of investigation, but rules of interpretation. Whatever, according to the legitimate rules of interpretation, appears to be a doctrine of Scripture, must be received as such; and we have not merely to ask—"Do the conclusions which we have drawn agree with the first principles of Scripture?"—but, "Do the first principles we have collected, agree with the conclusions of Scripture?" It would be no less preposterous, when we find any doctrine plainly revealed in Scripture, to reject it, merely because it does not accord with what we are pleased to denominate first principles, than it would be to deny any well authenticated fact in natural history, merely because it



does not fall in with our received system of physics. In either of these cases, we may justly suspect, that the first principles which we have collected are not the true first principles of nature or revelation. But scriptural doctrines, like historical facts, are stubborn things, and must not be tampered with to suit a human system. Indeed, although the several parts of Divine Revelation may differ, and greatly differ in relative importance, it is not true, that any principles are revealed in Scripture, to the test of which other passages must be brought with a view of ascertaining their truth: nor is any other test to be resorted to than those received rules of interpretation which have long approved themselves to the common sense and reason of mankind.

I do not, therefore, think it of the first importance to any theological system to determine which part of it consists of first principles, and what are not first principles, provided the whole is revealed: and an objection to that course of inquiry may be cited even from the pages of Mr. Wright himself.

"One man contends for notions, as first principles of religion, which another rejects as erroneous. With men of narrow views, and party spirit, every dogma is a leading article of faith. How then is the unlettered Christian, who has but little leisure for reading and study, to ascertain the first principles of Christianity?"

It is surely by no means necessary to perplex the unlettered Christian with any such inquiry. Let him only read his Bible, and believe whatever he finds there in its plain and obvious meaning; and it will be of little moment to him to distinguish first principles from deductions.

At the same time, though I do not view the importance of this question in the same light with our author, or admit the bearing which it is intend-

ed to have upon his system, I am happy to give my assent to his observations on the question, what points ought *not* to be regarded as first principles.

It must not be inferred, however, from this, that I allow the tenets which Mr. Wright lays down, as first principles, to be exclusively entitled to that appellation, or the means by which he would teach us to determine them to be, all of them, of the most satisfactory description.

One maxim, which Mr. Wright advances to assist us in this inquiry, is—"What is absolutely essential to Christianity must be capable of being understood by an unlearned person from any one of the four Gospels; otherwise, such a Gospel must be defective in the most essential matters. It is highly probable that some Christians, in the early ages of the church, had not more than one of the Gospels extant among them; nor can it be supposed an Apostle, or Evangelist, in writing a Gospel, would leave out any essential doctrine of Christianity."

What then was the end pursued by each of the Evangelists in writing his particular Gospel? If it was to teach all the essential doctrines of Christianity, then the maxims contended for by Mr. Wright must be admitted, that whatever is omitted by any is not an essential doctrine.—But two of the Evangelists have expressly told us the end they had in view. The end of one is, that his readers might "know the certainty of those things wherein they had been instructed;" that of the other, that "they might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, they might have life through his Name." But it is nowhere said that all things essential to Christianity are contained in each Gospel. The holy Scriptures, indeed, contain no system of doctrines, but a variety of notices scattered up and down in them, which render it

necessary for us to study the whole. The same argument, moreover, which is used to shew, that every single Gospel must contain every essential article of Christianity, might equally be made to shew, that every such article must also be contained in every book of the Pentateuch, the book of Proverbs, or the prophet Jonah: for it might happen, that persons were possessed of only one of them. But in fact it could seldom happen, that any body of Christians should possess only one of the four Gospels and no other means of Divine instruction; though it might often happen, and must at first have happened, that with other means of Divine instruction, they possessed no one copy of any of the four Gospels. What, in fact, are the Gospels? They are simple narratives of what our Blessed Saviour said and did; not of *all* that he said and did, but of the more important transactions and sayings of his life. And what was one of those sayings? "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Surely then this inferior capacity to bear Divine instruction during the lifetime of our Blessed Saviour, before the Holy Ghost was given, must prepare us to expect, that the four Gospels, far from containing every thing that might be considered essential to Christianity, when that religion came to be fully promulgated and explained, would leave much essential instruction to be afterwards supplied by the Apostles. And this expectation, moreover, is reasonable. The scheme of redemption was not completed before our Lord's death: the Holy Ghost was not given till after his ascension: and surely the measure of light, which was generally proposed before, cannot be worthy to be compared with that more abundant light which was shed abroad in the days of the Gospel; so that, if the knowledge expected be proportioned to the light vouchsafed, some doctrines

may be fairly considered as essential now, which could not be so regarded, which were even inscrutable mysteries, before the days of the Gospel.

When certain disciples were found by St. Paul at Ephesus, who had not so much as heard whether there were any Holy Ghost, there yet can be little doubt that those disciples had been made acquainted with every essential article of religion which John was able to teach them. Yet, when this new article of faith was once revealed, it became essential. It is essential now, and yet is not revealed in all the Gospels with equal distinctness, nor in any of them with that minuteness and prominence with which it is presented to us in the Acts and the Epistles; which is one among many instances to shew, that articles of faith, sufficiently important, and revealed with sufficient distinctness to be regarded as fundamental truths, may yet not be clearly gathered from every part of Revelation; and consequently that each separate portion of Scripture must not be taken, as a microcosm, or epitome, of the whole. I believe, indeed, that in point of fact, the single doctrine of our Lord's Deity might maintain its ground, on the authority of any one Gospel. But it is not necessary: nor do I think any other answer than that which has been already given, due to the remarks which follow (pp. 56—58,) and in which the author maintains, that all the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel may be learned from the public discourses of the Apostles recorded in the book of Acts.

(To be continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE perusal of the Letters of the Rev. Mr. Cooper, and of the Review of them in the Christian Observer, has given me cordial satisfaction.—May the excellent spirit they breathe animate the whole church, and excite every Christian, and particularly



every minister, to exert his best endeavours to heal our divisions, and to preserve "the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life."

To conciliate *ungodly* men, on either side, upon the Calvinian controversy, is hopeless. All we can do for them is, to remove every impediment out of their way, and to offend none who are not offended by the light of true holiness. The dissensions of Christians have been the grief and shame of the church, and the stumbling and triumph of the world. If we would serve the world, edify the church, or improve our personal piety, we must study peace, learn to appreciate it, and be willing to make every sacrifice, consistent with a good conscience, to preserve it.

Were I to consult my *character*, in shunning blind unfeeling bigotry, I should go to the extreme of latitudinarianism; and because, for ages, such a diversity of theological opinions has prevailed, I should easily pass to the conclusion, that it must ever prevail. But this species of liberality I do not affect. Truth ultimately will prevail, and *amicable* discussion is the legitimate mean of giving it the desired triumph. Such discussion I do not deprecate, but invite. It is a warfare which wastes no treasure, sheds no blood, provokes no bad passion. It is, indeed, a severe test of every evil principle; but it manifests none which did not previously exist. Notwithstanding all trite declamation against war and controversy, they are both necessary in the present state of man. Again and again have they preserved mankind from political and moral bondage to the devil and his children. He is unworthy of liberty, unworthy of truth, who is not willing to defend them, at the risk of fortune, fame, and life.

Of all this Mr. Cooper is fully aware: he knows that even the pacificators of the church must effect

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their godlike work by benevolent and well-directed controversy. He, however, calls us to peace in the spirit of peace, and indicates the principle upon which we may find it. Yet this principle is no novel discovery, but is as old as Christianity and as common sense itself. My only astonishment is, how any man, who is "taught of God," can refuse to acquiesce in it. Nothing is more simple, and nothing more necessary to peace and godly love, than to distinguish between the essential vital articles of our faith, and those minor truths which, however they may be necessary to the order, proportion, and beauty of the system, and even promote its general health and vigour, are yet not of the first necessity to its being and vitality. In the works of God, nothing is defective or superfluous. Every part is good in its place and kind; and, whether we can or cannot discern its particular nature and use, contributes something to the perfection of the whole. So it is in the human frame and in religion. Complexion and feature are necessary to beauty; yet beauty is not necessary to life. The free use of all the members is necessary to the strength and comfort of the body; and the privation of any one of them is felt in proportion to its use and dignity. But if, by casualty or disease, we be partially maimed in some noble member, yet general health and mental vigour may flourish unimpaired. Even when chronic diseases affect the health, vigour, usefulness, and comfort of the whole system, life is often prolonged for wise and merciful purposes; and so long as we retain the nature of a living man, we claim the kind attentions of humanity. In like manner, whatever blemishes may deform our Christianity, and impair its health and vigour, so as greatly to diminish our comfort and usefulness; yet, so long as we maintain its essential, vital character, of faith working by love to the common Saviour, we are

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entitled to be respected as his members. The healthy and strong should minister to the sick and weak, and bear their burdens, so fulfilling the law of love. Unwarrantably to unchristianize our brethren, is cruel, is wicked : and this unholy disposition has inflicted deeper wounds upon the truth, peace, and piety of the church, than any she hath suffered from the world. So long as we think men Christians, we shall treat them as such ; but the moment we call their character in question, we shall not only withhold our brotherly kindness, but perhaps feel ourselves pressed, in conscience, to treat them as enemies to genuine Christianity. Indeed, if Christianity be so equivocal as not to be distinguished, in the judgment of charity, by sure and unchangeable criteria, the Arminian and Calvinian corps of Christ's army must wield the sword of exterminating war as often as they come in contact ; and the cause of their Divine Master be wounded by their parricidal hands.

Mr. Cooper has marked, with precision, the difference between the essential and non-essential articles of our common faith ; and, in so doing, he has shewn the path of peace and union to all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity. As a decided anti-Calvinist in principle, yet as in heart a still more decided Christian, I meet him on the catholic ground on which he stands, with cordial respect and love : nor do I think *one* truly religious anti-Calvinist will decline to cultivate his friendship, and that of every Calvinist who breathes his spirit and acts on his principles.—The Christian nature, as well as precepts, teaches us to love one another : "For love is of God, and he who loveth his brother is born of God, and knoweth God. He dwelleth in God, and God in him."

Mr. Cooper has avowed explicitly, that the points debated between us do not constitute *vital* and *essential*

Christianity. I am equally happy to declare, that I *never* did myself consider them, and never knew the pious anti-Calvinist who did consider them, as involving errors incompatible with salvation, or even incompatible with the highest attainments of Christianity. Matter of fact sweeps away a thousand fine-spun theories, and proves that there is nothing held on either side inconsistent with the purest and most undefiled religion.—The peculiarity of their respective systems *may* modify and warp common truths, but the root and principle of godly men is one and the same. It is hidden with Christ in God, and from the Fountain of life and good is daily fed and renovated. It is this Divine nature and eternal life which enables them to tread on scorpions and neutralize their poison. If we disagree in five points non-essential, in how many essential ones do we agree ? The blessed Trinity in Unity—the miraculous incarnation and glorious atonement of Jesus—the radical and total depravity of man, so that *of himself* he can do *nothing* to save himself—that salvation is all of grace ;—the necessity of a regeneration of the Spirit, by the incorruptible word of truth—of a deep and universal repentance, and of a free justification by faith—the necessity of personal holiness, as the fruit and demonstration of lively faith—the whole work, fruit, and experience of the Spirit—and other vital truths, common to both, are safe grounds of peace and union. They are the very principles of our Christianity ; for if matter of fact demonstrates that Arminians and Calvinists, who hold the great common truths, may be alike pious, it also demonstrates, that they both *may* be equally unholy, if they do not hold them *aright*. But while it is conceded, that men may be saved, without the belief of the Calvinistic points, and may perish with them ; and that the vital truths of Christianity are common to both par-



ties, it strikes me as tremendously terrific, that they have been so long the bane of the Reformed Churches, and have been agitated in a temper destructive of peace and love. If theological principles are, like men, to be judged by their fruits, without pretending to decide on which side truth lies, it is evident that both those points, and the principles opposed to them, involve a most awful responsibility. If, therefore, they must still be agitated, it should be with deep reverence and godly fear, and as a question of principles and not of men.

No compromise of principle can be made on either side; but it should be felt and acknowledged by both, that common Christianity is of paramount consideration; and that our theological peculiarities should not be suffered to violate the peace and love of the church. I never have refused to meet a Calvinist, as such, in any walk of private or public life. My house is open to his association, my heart to his friendship, and my pulpit to his occasional ministry, *provided* he confine it to truths of the *first necessity* to be believed, experienced, and practised. My poor services I cheerfully offer under the same limitation, whenever I can serve the common cause. On these equitable and pacific terms, for thirty-two years, I have occasionally occupied their pulpits, and they mine. I have not offended them with my Arminianism, nor have they offended me with their Calvinism. But there are gentlemen far more Calvinistic than Calvin. They cannot discern, or will not admit, the distinction between truths essential and non-essential. Election and perseverance, as held by themselves, they appear to consider as essential as the Godhead and Atonement of Christ. They feel themselves equally pressed in spirit to exhibit them in *my* pulpit as in their *own*. No consideration for the prejudices of myself and of

my flock, (which, if they deserve no better name, are yet conscientious prejudices, and merit respect;) no regard of peace and brotherly kindness; no fear of the ill example to the world from the unnatural contentions of the church, can prevail on them not to force Calvinism on men who reject it with aversion. The principle they avow is, that to withhold any part of what they deem truth, is a dereliction of duty, through a criminal fear of man. To a clergyman avowedly of these principles, I have lately been obliged to declare, that he could not officiate for me, or I for him. Nor do I hesitate to say, that whoever, knowing my principles and abusing my catholic spirit, forcibly intrudes Calvinism into my pulpit, must expect that I should endeavour to counteract his statements. On these terms, the weary church can know no peace; but, on the high ground of our common Christianity, she may repose under her Redeemer's shadow. That a fair reciprocity should regulate the intercourse of differing parties in points admitted to be non-essential, when they occupy each other's pulpits, is so evident that it hardly requires an argument. At least the clergyman who declines meeting me on common ground, will doubtless, like a *man of honour*, give me satisfaction for the Calvinism he preaches in my pulpit, by allowing me to preach Arminianism in his. But I like not this gothic appeal; and if we are to cut our controversial way through each other's pulpits, I prefer to occupy my own in peace. We have enough to do, at least in the crowded scene of my labours, to make a stand against the world, the flesh, and the devil, without thus engaging in a *vivâ voce* controversy, to be carried on in our several churches, until, by degrees, it involved every pulpit of the place, and a population of perhaps eighty-thousand souls, in fire and smoke.—

No sober Christian will be surprised at my withdrawing peaceably from such a conflict. In the mean time, if any correspondent of the *Christian Observer* can point out terms of amity and union more fair, easy, and practicable, they will be cordially embraced by

INGENUUS.

To the Editor of the *Christian Observer*.

IN perusing a sermon preached last July at the Triennial Visitation of the Bishop of Chester, by the Reverend Edward Law, his lordship's chaplain, I could not but think that the following passage, coming as it does from an adverse pen, ought to have weight in refuting some, at least, of the grosser libels on the highly respectable body of men to whom it refers.

B. C.

"It has been objected against those who are called the Evangelical Clergy, that they form as it were a distinct sect in the church, and studiously withdraw themselves from such of their brethren as do not think exactly as they do upon certain points of doctrine. It cannot be denied that this has too often been the case: but by what, it may be asked, has such an effect been produced? That a similarity of sentiment should associate men together, cannot be deemed extraordinary; much less ought it to astonish those, who, beholding their conduct with an eye of jealousy and suspicion, have, by the coldness of their behaviour, driven them to those measures for which they now so severely blame them. But recriminations will always be odious and unprofitable. Forgetful of the past, and anxious only for the future, let each stretch out the hand of reconciliation, and hail one another as brethren, and henceforth let the only contest be, who shall labour most in promoting the honour and glory of their holy Master's kingdom.

"It has occasionally, I believe,

been alleged, that the Evangelical Clergy entertain views hostile to our Establishment. Sincerely, however, do I believe, that there is no body of men who are more attached to the principles of the Church of England, whatever shades of difference they may manifest in the explanation of some of its doctrines. Neither has there been any thing in their conduct to authorize such a suspicion. They have universally displayed a zeal and earnestness in its cause which all cannot but admire, and many would do well to imitate. It is true, that they have in some cases bordered too much upon enthusiasm: but even this is far better than cold apathy and religious indifference, and we shall find it an easier task to moderate the former than to rouse the latter. We are assured, by St. Paul, that 'it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing:' and when the subject is one of such vast importance, even the eternal welfare of mankind, we surely cannot wonder that an exuberant warmth of feeling should at times overstep the strict bounds which custom and prudence have more generally sanctioned and suggested. Surely it must be admitted, that the fervour which animates them is at least a proof of their sincerity, and shews that their heart is in the business: if they do err, it is from good intentions, which ought to command our respect, and cause us to 'wish them good luck in the name of the Lord.' The hope also that their efforts, as well as our own, may be effectual to the saving of souls, ought to lead us to throw no impediment in their progress, but to exclaim with St. Paul, 'Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.'

"Another objection which has been repeatedly brought against them is, that they are generally in-



clined to Calvinism. I believe, I am not mistaken in asserting, that the majority of them are decidedly opposed to the peculiar tenets of Calvin, which are only partially held by a very small proportion. Calvinism is, I conceive, any thing but the doctrine of the Gospel: I cannot, however, help thinking, that its professors have sometimes been too harshly treated; their opinions being represented as radically subversive of Christian morality, and themselves as enemies of the human race. We are too apt, I fear, to make our own premises, and then draw conclusions from them. Before we positively assert that such is the inevitable consequence of certain doctrines, we ought most fully to ascertain both their actual existence and whether they are not capable of such a modification as will entirely prevent those injurious effects of which we profess our apprehensions. In the judgment of the most respectable part of those few who hold them, they may be so explained as to be perfectly compatible with the free will of man, and the justice of the Creator. They allow that the doctrine of personal election is, if not correctly understood, a very dangerous one. That of personal reprobation (though it is indeed connected with the other) they do not, I believe, acknowledge. It rarely occurs that they introduce the subject into their discourses from the pulpit; and they maintain that personal holiness is an inseparable adjunct to personal election. Were they indeed to assert that there was any thing in the Divine decrees that could produce a freedom from moral restraint, or render void the precepts of the Gospel, the severest language of censure would be too feeble to employ. But can we, for a moment, imagine that any set of men would openly proclaim to the world, that there were doctrines which allowed them to immerse themselves in sensual indulgences, and give the rein to every

vicious passion, and that these doctrines were founded on the Gospel of that holy Saviour, 'who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works?' That some of the ministers of our church do hold some of the peculiar tenets of Calvinism cannot be denied: but I much question, whether we shall find, that these men are less conspicuous than others in the performance of the practical duties of religion, and less anxious to impress their necessity upon the minds of their respective hearers. Our church, in its Seventeenth Article, gives no decided opinion on the point in question, but leaves it open to both parties in the controversy, by employing the very words of Scripture, which *neither* can object to. Embracing within her pale both Calvinists and Arminians, she wishes them to consider themselves as children of one common parent, to love as brethren, and to be pitiful, and courteous, kindly affectioned one towards another."

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FAMILY SERMONS.—No. CIX.

Matt. xi 28—30.—*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

SUCH are the gracious words of the Lord Jesus Christ; of him who came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He was sometimes constrained to notice the wickedness and hypocrisy of many who heard him; and he rebuked them in a tone of authority which could belong only to the Son of God. In this very chapter we find him upbraiding the cities where most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.

“Wo unto thee, Chorazin! Wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sydon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sydon in the day of Judgment than for you.” In similar terms he proceeds to pass sentence upon Capernaum; which, though it had been as it were exalted to heaven, should be brought down to hell: declaring that it should be more tolerable even for Sodom in the day of judgment. In these denunciations we listen to language which seems to have been forced from the Friend of sinners. It is plain he took no pleasure in the words of condemnation. The words best suited to his lips were those of mercy and grace. And hence, almost immediately after he had pronounced the sentence of destruction on these impenitent cities, he speaks again the language of compassion, and extends his ready arms to embrace every penitent and returning sinner. “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

I. *The persons here addressed* are such as labour and are heavy laden; such as are oppressed with trouble and desirous of repose. Indeed, at this time, the whole Jewish nation might be considered as in a state of oppression and bondage. The observance of the law of Moses, and of the traditions of the elders, was a burden which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear: and in this view the words of the text may be understood as addressed to the whole of the multitude then assembled. It was a call upon every man who was subjected to the ceremonies of the

ancient law, and who felt the evil of that subjection. But we are more interested in looking at the passage in another light. The words are general, and include all who are suffering under affliction, whatever be its nature. Among the persons who at this time stood by, and heard the words of Jesus, were some, it may be presumed, who had felt in their own experience, that “man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” In looking back on their past lives, they had little to record but the pressure of poverty, the frowns of the world, affliction of body, and anxiety of mind. They had indulged in many fair prospects of happiness, but disappointment was still their portion; and they had found that “all was vanity and vexation of spirit.” Is this the description of any among us? Are there any here who feel that this world can never satisfy their desires, and that its promises are vain and delusive? Are there any who from the pressure of want and affliction, from the infirmities of age, or from the loss of those who were dear to their affections, are beginning to be weary and faint in their minds? To such are these merciful words of our Saviour addressed. He looks to those whom none is found to relieve, and none to pity. In him the fatherless findeth mercy, and the friendless are sure to meet a friend.

But the special objects of his regard are those who are weary of their sins; who feel the evil of a corrupt heart, and the burden of their transgressions. Thus weary and heavy laden was the Psalmist when he said, “Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as an heavy burden: they are too heavy for me. I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly: I go mourning all the day long.”—Let us bring this case also to ourselves. Is any one amongst us convinced of his guilt as a sinner, and anxious to flee from the wrath to come, broken and con-



trite in heart, feeling the full force of the confession we continually make in the house of prayer? Are we duly impressed with a sense of our condition as at enmity with God, and transgressors of his holy law? Are we "heartily sorry for these our misdoings?" Is the sense of them "grievous unto us," "the burden of them intolerable?" Is it the ardent breathing of our souls, Have mercy upon us, O Lord: for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake pardon all our offences, and receive us unto thy favour? Such are the weary and heavy laden, who feel their need of a Saviour, and to whom the offers of his grace are especially welcome. To such are the regards of Jesus Christ peculiarly directed. To such, in their strongest sense, are the words of the text addressed: they are the immediate subjects of the Saviour's invitation.

II. But let us consider *the nature of the invitation*: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."—The expression to *come to Christ*, frequently occurs in the New Testament. To understand it, let us imagine some weary and afflicted person to hear this invitation, and to be desirous of accepting it. What would be his conduct? He would approach Christ: he would look to him with an anxious wish to be relieved from his troubles: he would rely on the power of Christ to effect his deliverance: he would trust in his word: and the language of his heart would be, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Now, although Christ is no longer on earth to receive us into his bodily presence, yet this is the way in which we are now to come to him. And let me ask, Have we thus come to our Lord and Saviour? Have we felt ourselves to be sinners, and entreated him, with humble and contrite hearts, to accept of us, and forgive us our sins? Has

this brokenness of heart been connected also with the persuasion, that he was both able and willing to receive us? Have we been led to look to him in simple dependence on his mercy, and assured trust in his power? In short, have we resembled the Canaanitish woman of whom we read in the Gospel? Her prayer was, "Have mercy upon me! Lord help me!" When Christ seemed to neglect her entreaty, she still persisted in her believing application; and the disposition of her soul was approved and blessed. She was weary and heavy laden: she came to the Friend of sinners, and found rest.

But though coming to Christ might reasonably be understood to include all this, yet our Lord enlarges the invitation; and with an affectionate wish to persuade, he goes on to exhort his hearers, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart. It is as if he had said, "You have long been bending under another yoke. You have been subjected to ceremonial bondage; but, above all, you have been placed under the dominion of sin. Now take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. Be obedient to my commands. You have sat at the feet of other teachers: be contented now to sit at my feet and listen to me; for I am meek and lowly in heart. I have no pride to gratify, no desire to impose burdens on my disciples. My character is to be kind and condescending to all who are willing to hear me. The honest and the most ignorant will be welcome to my notice, and even the little children who come unto me, I am ready to welcome to my arms." Such is the persuasive language in which Jesus Christ invites all who are oppressed and afflicted to enrol themselves among his disciples, and to profit by his teaching. The lesson he taught was a sort of instruction for which the worldly

and the vain have no relish. It required them to worship God, not in form, but in spirit and in truth; to look for a new heart and a new nature; to be mild, merciful, patient, forgiving; to follow him as their Lord, and, if necessary, to lay down their lives for his sake;—nay, to renounce their own fancied righteousness, and to come as lost sinners to the footstool of his throne for mercy. Yet some there were who were willing to take that yoke upon them, and to learn of him, who, like Mary, sat at his feet and heard his word, and chose that good part which should not be taken from them.—Let us tread in their steps. Let us take upon us his yoke, and learn of him. If we have hitherto lived in the neglect of the invitations, and in disobedience to the commands of Christ, let us now seek to him in conformity to his will. Let every proud look be humbled, every high imagination brought low. Let sin of every kind be renounced and abhorred, and let us seek to have our hearts cleansed from its pollutions. In one word, “let us put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Let us seek to possess the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, and to have the abiding influence of his Spirit dwelling in our hearts. The excellence of such a state is stated in the text in such strong terms as to supply us with a powerful motive to labour to attain it; and to this point let us now direct our attention.

III. To those who, being weary and heavy laden, come to Christ, and submit to his yoke, *the promise* is, “Ye shall find rest unto your souls.” “I will give you rest; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”—If we examine the lives of the most distinguished followers of Christ, we

shall find that they had a large share of worldly suffering. Regarding only their outward lot, we should be inclined to think them of all men the most miserable. Yet did they possess largely this rest of soul. They found, in their own experience, the truth of this promise; and they have borne to it a clear and decisive testimony. If the Psalmist could exclaim, under a sense of the Divine goodness, “Return into thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee;” if the Prophet could declare, “Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee;” the disciples of Jesus could also rejoice under their severest trials, in the consolations of the Gospel. “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God: for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds in Christ.” The Apostles here attribute the peace and comfort they enjoyed to Christ as its Author. Thus also the promise of the text, “I will give you rest.” In the same way, Christ told his disciples, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you;”—not a frail and deceitful peace, shaken by every blast, but a peace not to be assailed by the storms of life; a peace not delusive but real, not worldly but heavenly. If we look at this promise, and the manner in which it was realized, amid the hardest trials of the first followers of Christ, we shall be convinced, that no promise can be more inviting than this; no possession more valuable than that which it holds out to us.

In looking around us, we see some bending under the weight of age and infirmities, some harassed in their minds by the daily troubles



of life, and some bowed down by affliction. Such also may be our portion. Our various troubles, whatever they are, are best known to God and ourselves. But there is none of them which may not be lightened by the grace of Christ.—Whilst in the world, we must necessarily feel many of the evils which belong to mortality: but here we have a remedy against their overwhelming power. The rest which Christ gives us here, though imperfect, will console us under the frowns of the world. It will support us under the severest of domestic trials. And while all below is dark and discouraging, it will elevate our view to that perfect rest which remaineth for the people of God. It will deprive age of its weight of infirmity, and make the hoary head a crown of rejoicing. Death itself will have no power to disturb his serenity whose soul reposes on God. “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me: thy rod and staff comfort me.”

Let us, with all due solemnity, press on our consciences these things—the invitation of our Saviour, and the promise of his rest. Is it not a desirable thing to be freed from that care and perplexity by which we are now so frequently burdened? to have a refuge from the anxieties, a relief from the afflictions, a shelter from the storms of life? Is it not pleasant to find, when all is distraction without, that there is peace within; when the world is our enemy, that God is our friend? Is there, then, any other way to attain this happy state than that which the text points out? We are apt to persuade ourselves that there are many ways. We expect happiness in the indulgence of *this* passion, and the gratification of *that* desire—but such hopes never fail to disappoint us. We still feel that something is wanting to set us perfectly at ease, and that the

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imagined good not only fails to console us when we most need consolation, but adds then a fresh pang to our distress. We still are conscious, even in the midst of the gratifications we eagerly seek, of a burden on our spirits which we cannot shake off; and that, however we may endeavour to silence reflection, we never can divest ourselves of uneasy thoughts. Why, then, should we continue to pursue happiness where experience tells us it is not to be found? Let us take upon us the yoke of Christ. His service is perfect freedom: it is a freedom from the tyranny of an evil conscience; a freedom from the slavish habits of a world which is led captive by the devil; a freedom from the fear of death, and from that which is the sting of death—sin. Until we are thus made free, by the spirit of God, through faith in Christ Jesus, we are, as our church expresses it, tied and bound with the chain of our sins. Let us, then, become acquainted with our true state. “His servants we are to whom we obey.” The sinner is in bondage to sin; and until he perceives that bondage, until he feels himself to be weary and heavy laden, and desires to be released, Christ will profit him nothing. Until we discover our want of a Saviour, we shall not come to him for salvation. Let it, then, be our earnest prayer, that God would open our eyes to our true state, and would lead us to Christ; that thus, seeing the things which make for our peace, we may obtain the forgiveness of our sins, and be accepted of God through him.

But there may be some here so depressed in their minds by a sense of their unworthiness, that they cannot bring themselves to believe that such gracious words of invitation could be meant for them. They deem it a thing incredible that such mercy should be extended to them. But here all doubt or despondency

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is misplaced. What is it that Christ requires? That we should be weary and heavy laden. Is this our character? Are we anxious to come to him, to believe in him, to obey him? What, then, does he say? "Come unto me, *all ye that are weary*; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." No words can be more gracious, no promise more certain. If we come in a right frame of mind, if we possess that lively faith in the Saviour of sinners, and that humility of spirit which are implied in the very expression coming to Christ, there can be no question as to our being received. The word of the Son of God is pledged to our acceptance: he will in no wise reject us. The world may cast us out, but Christ will own and bless us.—The world may give trouble, but He will give us rest.

Some, perhaps, might be glad to enjoy the rest which Christ promises; but they dislike the yoke which accompanies it. They regard religion as a thing of gloom: it calls us to the exercise of prayer: it requires mortification and self-denial. We must resist the world, the flesh, and the devil; renounce our own will and our own ways, crucify our evil affections and lusts, live soberly, righteously, and godly. Now all this is so contrary to the natural taste and inclination of fallen man, that they consider Christ's yoke as oppressive, and his burden as grievous. And yet what is the language of the Saviour of sinners? "My yoke is easy: my burden is light. My service is a pleasant and cheerful service: my ways are ways of pleasantness and peace." To be convinced of this, let us appeal to facts.—Who were the men, in early times, most distinguished for contentment and cheerfulness of spirit; the disciples or the enemies of Christ? The men who rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer, or their persecutors? Those who took joy-

fully the spoiling of their goods, or the robbers who plundered them? Those whose good things were in this world alone, or those who were blessed with a hope full of immortality? The truth is, that in every age of the church, if we look for repose of mind and real cheerfulness, we shall find it eminently among the true followers of Jesus Christ. The rest which other persons have, they derive from perishable sources: the rest of the Christian he derives from Him who ever liveth to supply all his needs. And the man who, weary of the world and its vanities, obeys the exhortation of the text, and experiences the power and the enjoyments of religion, will not wish for a better service, or a lighter yoke than that of his gracious Redeemer.

Whether we have accepted the invitation of our Lord is known to that God who is the searcher of hearts, and from whom no secrets are hid. But let us remember that on this grand point depends the salvation of our souls. The rest which the Saviour bestows on earth is preparatory to that rest in heaven which remaineth for the people of God; and if we reject his service here, he will reject us in the world to come. Since Christ, then, is willing to have compassion upon us, let us have compassion upon ourselves. Let us turn to him with our whole hearts. And if a motive be wanting, we may find it in these words of condescending grace and mercy: "Come unto me, *all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, and I will give you rest: take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly; and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

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To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

Much difference of opinion has arisen among commentators respecting the real import of 2 Kings v. 15—19, as it bears on the character and pur-



poses of Naaman. The following is the view which has been taken of this passage in a sermon which appears in the first of the two volumes of sermons, lately published by that able and pious divine, the Rev. Mr. Fawcett, of Carlisle, and of which I was glad to see a Review in your last Number. After citing Naaman's confession of faith, and his vow to worship, with burnt offering and sacrifice, none but the God of Israel, Mr. Fawcett thus proceeds—

“His language is like that of repenting Israel: ‘What have I to do any more with idols?’ He renounces them altogether, and immediately. Henceforth, from this very moment, neither Rimmon, nor any other idol, shall receive the smallest tribute at his hand: he will worship the Lord, and him only. His resolution is, ‘The God that answereth by fire, and that healeth by miracle, let him be my God; him will I follow and serve.’

“Yet in this noble and determined purpose, there appear the symptoms of some infirmity. One practice, which he either thinks it his duty to continue, or has not courage to forsake, perplexes his conscience, and causes him to fear, lest he should, thereby, provoke the Lord God of Israel, whom he has avouched to be his God. Never more will he enter the house of Rimmon, to present any worship of his own. But when the king, his master, repairs to the house of his god, Naaman either thinks it his duty to go with him, or dares not decline the service. And, further, when the king stands before the image of Rimmon, before that image he will bow. And shall Naaman stand erect while his sovereign bows? Shall he, or even can he? For the king will not content himself with a slight inclination of his body; but, with lowly obeisance, will bend before his god: and Naaman, on whose arm he closely leans, must be carried along with him in the same motion.

Yet for a worshipper of Jehovah to bow in the house of Rimmon! He trembles at his own half-intended deed, and indirectly asks the prophet's opinion, while he deprecates the Divine displeasure. ‘In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon; when I bow myself down in the house of Rimmon; the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.’

“What now shall Elisha say to this trembling inquirer? Never was a nicer question of casuistry proposed by a doubting conscience. Naaman is a servant of the king, and must go where his master will take him; and, if it be into the house of Rimmon, he has declared that he is no worshipper of Rimmon, but of Jehovah. He goes there as an attendant on the king, not as a votary of the god; and this he avows. If, then, he performs no real act of conformity; if he openly protests against Rimmon, let him go with his master where he will, he goes no where out of hallowed ground. An idol is nothing, and an idol temple is nothing. The earth is the Lord's, and every place and house in it are his; and no place is unclean to them who know that ‘the Lord he is God, and that there is no God beside him.’ Yet we can hardly suppose that Naaman possessed this measure of spiritual understanding. His request for two mules' burden of earth shewed that his views were as yet confined, and mixed with superstition. We cannot but suspect, that he was in the house of Rimmon ‘with conscience of the idol.’ The enlarged sentiments which St. Paul has taught us on this head were not only beyond Naaman's proficiency, but above the standard of those times, even in Israel.

“What, then, will the prophet say? Will he, on the one hand, ad-

vise disobedience to his king; or, on the other, recommend unfaithfulness to his God? Will he push on his new convert to a boldness in profession which shall outrun his judgment? Or will he allow him to make any, even the least, compromise of conscience? So much here depends on the state of the man's heart, that what might be good advice on the supposition of some motives, might be bad on the surmise of others.—Too rigid an injunction might break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax: whereas an express permission might remove salutary apprehensions. The sanction of the prophet might make him tread, without fear, on ground which ought to be explored with the most scrupulous diligence; and the path thereof learnt by spiritual discernment in the disciple himself.

“Elisha, therefore, gives him no direction: he neither says bow, nor bow not: he neither tells him, the Lord will pardon thee, nor the Lord will not pardon thee in this thing; but he expresses his good will: he says, ‘Go in peace!’ and says it no doubt in such a manner, and with such a look, as to preclude further reply. Thus he sends him away with a blessing, commends him to the Divine guidance, and leaves him to discover the nicer shades of duty, as he becomes of full age, and his conscience more thoroughly exercised to discern good and evil.”

Such is the statement of Mr. Fawcett; and I am far from affirming that it is not that interpretation in which the judicious reader may readily acquiesce. But, without prejudice to an opinion which it is impossible to disprove and easy to allow, I would venture to propose a different view of the subject; which I am disposed, after mature deliberation, to prefer. To me it is far from evident, that Naaman had become a real convert to the truth. He appears to have been a man of quick, yet gen-

erous feelings; easily exasperated by an apparent indignity, and not less alive to friendly usage, for which he was anxious to evince his gratitude by large and expensive liberalities. After suffering under a loathsome disease, when he found himself suddenly and completely recovered by the miraculous power which God had commissioned his servant Elisha to exert, he seems to have been transported with thankfulness and joy.—He returns hastily to the prophet: he extols the power and glory of the God of Israel above all the fabled attributes of Idols: he is fain to requite the prophet with costly gifts; and, when he cannot prevail with him to accept the smallest present, he declares his purpose to offer sacrifices, in future, to none but that Almighty Being, whose benevolence he had so recently and largely experienced. Accordingly, he solicits a quantity of earth from the holy land, with which he proposes to construct an altar, on which fires shall be kindled to Jehovah alone: and he then apologises for the necessity under which he is placed, of occasionally taking a part in the stated worship of an idol.

In all this I can discover nothing that stamps the authenticity of Naaman's conversion. All that he said or did, after his wonderful restoration to health, denotes a heart overflowing with joy, and disposed to make every return to his benefactor; but it does not exhibit the sober conclusions, the deliberate and coherent resolves, of a man in whom any spiritual renovation had taken place. It is likely enough that Naaman was no zealot for the religious persuasion of his country—no fond admirer of those impotent deities whom he had found unable or reluctant to effect his cure; and undoubtedly his respect for them would be further impaired, by the comparison he would institute between their insufficiency and the almightiness of Jehovah. As



far, therefore, as he himself was concerned, he was prepared to abandon the superstition of his fathers, and to pay exclusive homage to the God of Israel. He had no other way of testifying his gratitude to his Divine Physician; and he would be the more earnest in protestations of respect for the Master, in order to gratify the disinterested servant, who declined all personal remuneration. All this is very consistent with human nature. It is natural, in the first movements of gratitude, to account no recompense too large for the benefit received. It is natural to employ the most energetic language, in conveying our sentiments to a bountiful benefactor. It is natural, when we are prevented from discharging the debt in one way, to look about for some other expedient.—And this is exactly what appears to me to be observable in the conduct of Naaman. Unable to satisfy his gratitude by heaping kindnesses upon the prophet, who resists his importunity, he falls upon a more specious expedient, and requests assistance in setting up an altar to Jehovah. This worship, however, is to be conducted with a privacy that might secure from molestation a less powerful man than the Syrian captain, among a people ever ready to inscribe new altars to new gods. At the same time, he never disguises his intention of still practising idolatry in public, and of bowing down to Rimmon when deference to his king required it. Such are his demeanour and language; in which I look in vain for any symptoms of genuine faith. Naaman acts as might be expected under his circumstances, from a feeling and a generous man, a heathen and a courtier—from a man who, not being rivetted to idolatry by superstitious prejudices and scruples, was well prepared to concede the highest honours to a Being who had served him better than all his idol gods. But he

is far from shewing an alienation of heart from gentile vanities, and a cordial adherence to the Holy One of Israel. This opinion seems to be corroborated by the prophet's reply. To a request of Naaman, that he might be furnished with consecrated earth for the building of an altar, Elisha makes no answer whatever. To have granted it would have been a violation of the Mosaic Law; and it may have been very apparent to the prophet, that the petition was dictated by motives in which was little or no sentiment of religion. Indeed, that it was little more than a court-like address may be concluded from the circumstance, that Naaman did not repeat it, although he clearly considered the possession of holy soil a preparative indispensable to the worship of Jehovah. Had that worship been very near his heart, he would not so soon have forgotten his intentions, nor have been put off with any thing short of an absolute denial. From these premises, I should draw much the same conclusion with Mr. Fawcett, as to the meaning of Elisha's answer, "Go in peace;" that in fact it meant nothing, being the ordinary form of oriental courtesy in dismissing a visiter. It is most certain that he did not mean an assent to the request, that Naaman should be supplied with materials to construct an altar out of Jerusalem: and I can as little believe that he connived at the latter proposal, and sent him away a chartered idolater. The Syrian chieftain would not misapprehend the prophet's meaning, but would receive the usual civilities as they were meant: and to those, the prophet, having already fulfilled his commission, saw reason not to add a single word with respect to the unmeaning propositions ceremoniously submitted to his decision.

I am, &c.

H. B.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THAT war is a great evil, few persons will be disposed to deny, so recently after a war which has been unexampled in its duration and extent, and the direful effects of which are still felt in every city, hamlet, and cottage of Europe. But though war is an evil, abstractly considered, yet I imagine it is only one of many which are inseparable from the present state of humanity, but which, by the gracious dispositions of an all-wise Providence, are ultimately made the instruments of good. The hurricane and thunder storm are necessary for preserving the salubrity of the atmosphere. The history of the past exhibits numerous instances in which "the walls of Zion have been built in troublous times;" and prophecy leads us to expect, that the path to that state of rest and of peace which awaits the church of God, lies through many storms and convulsions of a political nature. This being the case, it becomes an object of considerable importance to ascertain the line of conduct which is proper for the Christian, when his country is engaged in war; and I propose, therefore, to make a few remarks upon some late publications intended to enlighten the public on this important subject.

The first is entitled, "A Solemn Review of the Custom of War, shewing that War is the Effect of popular Delusion, and proposing a Remedy."—Now, though every sincere Christian must deplore the necessity of war, I am not aware that, in this country at least, war can be viewed as a custom: neither can it be considered as always the result of popular delusion. The author of this tract himself refers it to a different source. "By what means," he inquires, "is it possible to produce such a change in the state of society, and the views

of Christian nations, that every ruler shall feel that his honour, safety, and happiness depend on his displaying a pacific spirit, and forbearing to engage in offensive wars? Is it not possible to form powerful Peace Societies, in every nation of Christendom, whose object shall be to support Government, and secure the nation from war?"

The other means proposed, are, "liberal contributions" for the purpose "of diffusing light," the establishment of printing presses for the circulation of tracts, the addresses of Christian ministers from the pulpit, the education of youth in the principles of the Society, the concurring aid of all Bible Societies, and Societies for propagating the Gospel. It is added; "But our hopes and expectations are not limited here. The Societies of Friends and Shakers will come in, of course, and cordially contribute to the glorious object." Having enlisted this numerous body, the writer's anticipations are greatly extended, obstacles are foreseen, but are believed not to be insurmountable; and he even exclaims, "God will aid in such a cause; and the time is at hand, when this prediction shall be fulfilled."

Now, Mr. Editor, I as devoutly wish that wars may cease as the writer himself. But in the mean time, we must take care lest, in the prospect of universal peace and love, we forget those more immediate duties, indispensable to us as the subjects of a government which, without boasting, may in a peculiar manner be considered as appointed of God "for the punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well." All that is required of us is a dutiful subjection to the government under which we live, as unto God, in all things lawful; in so doing we shall



best approve ourselves as the servants of Him who is "King of kings and Lord of lords."

Again; should the government determine that war is unavoidable, what must be the conduct of this "*most powerful association*," acting upon its avowed principles?—Surely they must step forward in all their might, and declare their determined opposition to war in the abstract—to *all* war;—that without the employment of force they will not contribute to the exigences of the state; and sooner lay down their lives than be actively employed in warfare. How this line of conduct can contribute to support government, I am unable to perceive. Were it possible to realize the views of this Society, the effect must be, to paralyze the arm of power, introduce discord, confusion, and bloodshed into the very bosom of society, and lay the country open, as an easy prey, to any unprincipled and ambitious aggressor!

In the second tract of the Peace Society, an attempt is made to establish a doctrine nowhere recognised in Scripture; namely, that all the precepts contained in the New Testament, addressed to individual Christians, are equally applicable to "*professing Christian states and political bodies*;" and it is demanded "by what authority is the sense restrained" to individuals? All the answer which can be required, is reducible to this simple position; that, throughout the New Testament, no precepts or instructions are addressed to states or political bodies, of any description whatever. The reason is obvious: for the faith and hope of the Gospel have respect exclusively to *individuals* who repent of their sins, believe in Christ Jesus, and obtain mercy and a good hope through grace, that they shall in due time become participators of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

Surely self-defence is a duty incumbent on Christians individually; and if such should hold the reins of government in any country, it would consequently be their duty as governors to bend the whole energies of the nation in defence of the just rights of their country, against all aggressors. With regard to private individuals, I hesitate not to affirm, that all associations of Christians which shall attempt to overawe the civil governments under which they live, on any pretext and in any manner whatever, act in direct opposition to their duty to "*the powers that be*," which are ordained of God.

In the third tract, the views of the Society are supported from the practice of the early Christians. Yet the very first instance mentioned, shews that the Christians of those days had not forgotten the instructions of the Apostles; for it is quoted from Tertullian, that in sundry rebellions against the Roman emperors, "not a Christian could be found in any of the rebel armies." It is probably true, that about the year of our Lord 200, some Christians refused to enter the army on account of the pagan rites commonly observed in the camp; and that others, having misapplied certain passages of Scripture, held themselves bound to abstain from all war. But neither of these facts can, in the smallest degree, affect the question at issue.

We are next informed, that war "includes robbery, fraud, debauchery, hatred, resentment, and the exercise of all the bad passions of our nature." But here I naturally turn my recollection to the Christians of our army and navy, who, at different times, have stood forward and "turned the battle from our gates"—who have shed their blood in defence of all that is dear to us as members of a well-ordered civil community. And I think we are entitled to say, with confidence, that these were not guilty

of those crimes; but, on the contrary, that pity for our deluded enemies—a disposition to do them every office of kindness and humanity, whenever duty rendered this practicable—a firm confidence in the blessing of God on their exertions—a magnanimous contempt of danger, when opposed to duty—a patient perseverance in a cause to which they had devoted their lives—and a generous forbearance in the moment of victory, shone conspicuous in their conduct during the arduous struggles in which this country has been repeatedly engaged.

But it is further affirmed, that war “includes *bloodshed, not unawares*, which is the scriptural definition of *murder* :” and it is inquired whether a dispensation has been granted to any of the potentates of the earth, to alter the nature of vice! Is this a fair interpretation of Scripture? Was it unawares that the avenger of blood pursued the inadvertent homicide, and, if possible, shed his blood? Was it unawares that certain transgressors were stoned to death; that the enemies of Israel were put to death without mercy, and that rebellions were quenched by the blood of thousands of Israelites? And were all the deaths produced by these means necessarily *murders*, because not effected *unawares*?

This tract concludes with the inquiry, whether it would not be better for princes to settle their differences by arbitration, than by the sword? Unhappily for the suggestion, one of two things would be requisite; namely, arbiters to whom all would submit, or some third power able to compel those who might prove refractory. But would not war still be necessary in order to compulsion; at least till some man shall devise an easier method of inducing independent governments to act contrary to their inclinations?

The fourth tract is occupied with extracts from the writings of Eras-

mus, on the subject of war, tending to show its baneful effects. I pass on to a more recent publication to the same effect, entitled “*Pictures of War*,” an octavo volume, occupied almost exclusively with extracts from ancient and modern authors, magazines, &c. tending to show that war is attended with the loss of many lives, destruction of property, general distress, and innumerable other evils. A work of the description now under consideration, professing no claims to originality, can be viewed only in connection with the sentiments which it is employed to disseminate. These I cannot pass by unnoticed, involving as they do an important part of the every-day duty of Christians. In general, I premise, that it is not the duty of every Christian to occupy himself with the more profound questions of political economy. But of *this* there can be no doubt, that under the Gospel as under the Law, it is the duty of all to “fear God and the king, and meddle not with them that are given to change;”—to be of a meek and humble disposition, and not at all disposed to “meddle with matters great, or things too high for them.” I regret that this line of conduct has not been more uniformly followed in the publication before me, and that the author did not pay more deference to the example of John the Baptist, who, “like Him whose forerunner he was, would not interfere with civil or political arrangements” (p. 235;) and that of our Lord, “who paid tribute money, which went to support military power, and set the example of giving no just cause of offence to any” (p. 235;) and this although the tribute *might* even go in support of war, idolatry, or foolish games. Again (p. 238,) “If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight,” said our blessed Saviour; that is, in support of his kingdom. Is it possible that



any person of ordinary capacity, who reads this passage in its natural connexion with the sacred context, should for a moment suppose that it absolutely prohibits fighting in all cases? In like manner, when it is predicted, that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," can there be any reason to think that any thing more than the employment of the sword in support of religion (in place of fleeing from persecutions) is prohibited to private Christians?

But this is not all: it is even affirmed (p. 217,) that the command, "*thou shalt not kill*," is imperative on governments equally as on individuals. Yet, unless it can be said that all the other precepts of the Moral Law were addressed to governments, there is no ground for this interpretation. On the contrary, the necessity of taking away human life, on particular occasions, by authority of government, is clearly illustrated by what took place under the Law; and this, with the approbation of those who were raised up and inspired of God, during the infant state of the Jewish commonwealth. We are next informed (p. 239,) in direct opposition to the sacred text (Rom. xiii. 1, *et seq.*) that only to those rulers "who do what God commands in his own revelation," we owe subjection and obedience; and that, otherwise, the Christian might even kill his brother inadvertently in battle. But in just and lawful war, it is no more murder to deprive the enemies of our country of life, than for the public executioner of justice to put to death the murderer. Yet our author will not admit even of this. He says (p. 146,) "The Supreme Being alone possesses a power to take away human life; and we rebel against his laws, when we undertake to execute death in any way whatever, upon any of his rational creatures." And again; "Let all those laws be repeal-

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ed which authorize juries, judges, sheriffs, or hangmen, to assume the resentments of individuals, and to commit murder in cold blood in any case whatever."—I beg leave to remind the author, that the Apostle says to private Christians, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves;" but of the civil power or ruler, "he is the *minister of God*, a *revenger* to execute wrath on him that doeth evil." (Rom. xiii. 4.)

The supposed "distinction betwixt political expediency and Christian duty" alluded to (p. 250,) may have arisen from inattention to the difference betwixt the duties of a magistrate and those of a private Christian. When well understood, they will not be found in principle at all opposed to each other, nor in practice at all incompatible. But as private Christians, it is no part of our duty to usurp the place of our superiors, by presuming to determine whether any particular war is avoidable or not. Far less, I imagine, should we, with our author, adopt the sentiments of the tract first noticed, relative to the formation of a powerful association for the purpose of counteracting government on the subject of war. This project, it would appear, was originally of American growth, and may have been administered with the view of weakening the "popular delusion," or "war-fever," which, at that time, prevailed. Another writer, whom my author follows to a great extent, reasons in the following manner: "Self-defence is, no doubt, a *primary law of nature*; but it is of nature only: it belongs solely to the animal life; and the brute creation, knowing no further, act up to the perfection of their nature. Had man, like them, no further privilege than mortal existence, he might be right in following their example." (p. 248.) By what authority does this writer dispense with a primary law of

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nature? The whole Moral Law is only a transcript of the primary law of nature; and this law Jesus Christ came not to obliterate, but to sanction and to fulfil in every respect.

In conclusion, it is perhaps superfluous to remark, that I should be as far as the writers of these publications from encouraging aggression and violence in any form; or from fostering a spirit of national hostility against any country. I apprehend that the injunction of the Apostle (Rom. xii. 18.) is binding on all Christians, whether magistrates or subjects: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." I know that states and political bodies, like individuals, may be swayed by motives which cannot be approved of on Christian principles. But what then? Are civil governments our subjects, or amenable to our jurisdiction? And if they are not, shall Christians league together for the purpose of wresting the sword out of the hands of the civil magistrate, and set themselves up as alone qualified to govern the earth? The question I think dictates its own answer.\*

X. Y. Z.

\* Our readers are aware that it is not our custom to give our own opinion on the communications of our correspondents.—We, therefore, leave the arguments of X. Y. Z. to find their due level; yet we cannot but feel much pleasure in communicating the following letters from the Emperor of Russia and Prince Gallitzin to the Peace Society. Of these there can be but one opinion.

"To the Rev. Noah Worcester, Secretary of the Massachusetts Peace Society.

"Sir—Your letter in behalf of the Massachusetts Peace Society, with the books accompanying it, were received. The object which this philanthropic institution has in view, the dissemination of the principles of peace and amity among men, meets my cordial approbation. My endeavours to procure peace and good-will among nations are already known; and the power and influence which Almighty God has committed to me, shall ever be employ-

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

MUCH has been written, and, in my opinion, much remains to be written, on the introduction of the Madras system of education into Europe, and especially into the United Kingdom; the western division of which has become, in its various relations, the source of deep and even alarming

ed, I trust, in striving to secure to the nations the blessings of that peace which they now enjoy.

"Considering the object of your Society, the promotion of peace among mankind, as one eminently congenial to the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I have judged it proper to express these my sentiments respecting your labours, in answer to your communication to me on this subject.

ALEXANDER.

"St. Petersburg, July 4, 1817."

"Sir—I received your letter of the 9th of April, with the Numbers of the 'Friend of Peace' accompanying it, for which I return you my hearty thanks. The object which your Society has in view is of great importance to the well-being and happiness of the human race. Indeed it seems to me to be almost the same as that of Bible Societies; for it is only in proportion as the divine and peaceable principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ prevail in the hearts of men that lasting and universal peace can be expected. A blessed period is promised in the word of God, when men shall learn the art of war no more. This period I understand to be the same as that in which it is prophesied that all men shall know the Lord, even from the least unto the greatest, and that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord. These latter promises seem to be daily fulfilling in every quarter of the world, by the exertion of Bible and other Christian Societies to disseminate among men the saving and pacific principles of Jesus Christ. They are preparing the way for your Society's gaining its object—peace—universal peace, when men shall learn the art of war no more. Most earnestly praying for every blessing to accompany your labour, in promoting peace on earth and good-will among men, I shall reckon it a peculiar honour to be among the members of such a humane society.

"I remain, Sir, your most

"obedient servant,

"PRINCE ALEX. GALLITZIN."



interest. Of its political situation, I do not affect to form any judgment beyond what may be gathered from the journals on both sides of the channel, and the commentaries supplied by the editors on the intelligence found in their columns. Of its moral state, few satisfactory notices are circulated, except in the Reports of such societies as either in part or exclusively consider Ireland as the scene of their operations. The impression produced by the evidence is, that the country is generally in a state of great moral and intellectual degradation. Many persons, however, have sanguine hopes that the Madras scheme will entirely transform this western wilderness; or, if this be expecting too much, that at least there will be effected a sensible, and in prospect a permanent, improvement in the population of the whole island.

That much will be done we have indeed great encouragement to look for; but I own that, with every prepossession in favour of the *mechanical* process adopted in the national schools, I have many apprehensions that the value of the process will be in a considerable measure neutralized, unless every establishment be superintended by a MASTER OF MORALS, who, in managing the very powerful machinery of the new mode, may especially provide that (as far as human wisdom can ensure such a consequence) what is received into the understanding may influence the heart. After what has been said in your pages on emulation, I shall refrain from winding my way into that difficult subject, farther than by saying, that after every explanation in favour of the Madras scheme, it appears to me that the eager appetite of human nature for distinction and display will find much strong aliment furnished by the general discipline of the system in question. If the aliment be diluted or counteracted by a concurrent lowering regimen, *this* process will, in my judgment, not be found among the origi-

nal arrangements of Bell and Lancaster, but must be superinduced by those masters of morals whose presence, as principals, is most devoutly to be wished for in each of the thousand or ten thousand schools erected either in reality or imagination throughout the British empire. An excellent correspondent, in your number for last November, appears indeed, in his reasonable jealousy on the subject under discussion, to disrelish altogether the grand project of national education, on the ground of its wholesale and superficial character being strongly at variance with any really moral object; and he would almost draw away the monitors, and their five hundreds, in order to educate well the remaining few. Perhaps I have exaggerated his meaning; but to me he appears in any event to have magnified the object of his jealousy. To myself, the case simply seems to be, that if it be our duty to educate the people, and if an immense engine is already at work capable of performing the mechanical part of instruction—and if this engine be set in motion by an impulse so powerful, and according to the calculation of the engineer so permanent, that no expectation can be entertained of its failure, either in energy or continuance of action—then we surely ought to avail ourselves of the opportunity thus placed within our reach, and endeavour so to direct the movements of the machine as to make its mechanism subserve the highest purposes of moral utility. Apart from metaphor—the national schools ought not, I conceive, to be diminished, even if they did nothing better than teach children to read and write; for the good effected by this stage of instruction is certainly better than nothing. Its tendency is civilizing, and it affords at least the means of obtaining some acquaintance with the Scriptures whenever they fall in the learner's way. I do not suppose that your correspondent would by any means consent to the annihilation of the

Madras system. If an evil, it is, even in his eyes, not an incurable one; and it is capable of being rendered more innoxious in proportion as it is purified by such considerate men as think more of children's hearts than of their understandings. This purifying process must and will be performed by any person of sound mind, as far as the general regulations of the school will allow him to pursue his object. The extent of his meliorating endeavours may even be very considerable. The superintendent or visiter is superintendent of the master as well as of the pupils. On the supposition that the master possesses an average share of right thinking and docility, and farther that he is generally dependant for his situation and prospects upon the visiter, here is ground somewhat prepared both by principle and personal interest for the reception of good seed; and even the lowest produce has its proportion of value. Still, the master, even under these favourable circumstances, will naturally be influenced by the temptation of hastening onward his scholars, in order, of course, to gain the credit of every party concerned in the establishment. The temptation will assume the guise of duty: and, in truth, he must be an expert analyst who, in such a case, can tell where ambition and conscience may be definitely separated; for, if the boys are to excel, they must speed forward; and if they speed forward, they must be impelled; and the mechanical impulse of the Madras scheme, after all the labours of the apologist, is downright emulation: and by what super-human dexterity will the instructor push his pupils onward along the narrow path, where on one side is seen a moral peril, on the other the apprehension of censure or discredit, if the boys are *defrauded* of stimulus? Under these circumstances arises a case in which the visiter is called upon to teach the teacher; and to remind

him that five hundred possessors of immortal souls are arranged before him, who, from the discipline employed in that room for the next few months or years, will in all likelihood receive impressions which will influence the remainder of their lives.—Whatever is there taught should unquestionably be taught not so much to merely intellectual as to moral and responsible creatures; to those who are so to pass through things temporal, that finally they lose not the things eternal. If this be conceded, the master should in fairness be apprized that an education properly religious may possibly be less visibly progressive than if his instructions began and terminated in merely human learning. The visiter will do well to assure him, that what is lost in point of time or fineness of effect, will be compensated by gain of principles;—I speak on the belief that, according to the usual economy of Providence, no religious labour will finally be in vain. I am aware that this is a kind of prospective education, which cannot be rightly appreciated by any master who does not pursue his object with some portion of Christian feeling: but as far as his moral perceptions reach, so far will the visiter direct them to the paramount importance of giving the children a moral or rather spiritual education; and so far, in the practical details of instruction, will the superintendent inculcate upon his inferior, the necessity of sacrificing the splendour of rapid success to ensure the less sparkling advantage of training up the heirs of eternity for their high destination.

But as the current of the world usually flows, who does not see that the patrons and subordinate managers of these schools must *degrade*, if they resolve to work the Madras engine by slow and measured movements, and of course without any degree of pressure on the safety-valve. I mean, that when men on



Christian principle check the forwardness of clever boys, and give their duller comrades time to come up; in which case the wits must in some measure stand still;—and when they not only effect this balance of power, but possibly retard, to a certain degree, the learned growth of both parties by frequent religious admonition and serious appeals to their consciences;—and when, on the other hand, men acting on worldly motives load the safety-valve, by urging forward their hundreds or half-thousands by all the popular and goading stimulants of emulation;—in these contrasted cases, the spectator who may happen to visit both classes of schools will certainly see in the Christianized establishment less of vividness of character, less of general quickness, brilliancy, and ardour, than in the secularized seminary, where *quocunque modo* human passion, in its varied exhibitions of ambition, vanity, selfishness, and willingness to rise by the fall of others, obtrudes upon the reflecting observer most unpleasant traces of our corrupt original. But, alas! as the majority of observers are unreflecting, few persons will understand what is intended by the *degradation* just alluded to. It must, however, be again and again insisted upon, that whenever the power exists of purifying, in whatever degree, the national schools from worldly motives of action, such power must be exerted, otherwise its possessors will incur the heavy censure of leaving an allowed evil to produce its natural consequences. The introduction of the Madras system is regarded by many thinking persons as a grand but fearful experiment on mankind; and by all as the earnest of some extensive alteration in the structure of civil society. They who survive the next thirty years will be, of course, more competent judges of the question than ourselves, who speculate only about contingent good or evil.

There is one subject which, in my opinion, and specifically with regard

to Ireland, closely connects itself with the matter in discussion; namely, the Bible Society; and so connects itself, that I can scarcely view the two points separately. When all shall eventually be able to read, they will assuredly desire something which may satisfy the new appetite, and books will be found by themselves if not furnished by others.—The pupils of Dr. Bell are generally in the way to procure Bibles and the accredited books of the National Society. But others are educated on what is termed the liberal scale; a scale so liberal, that I do not find that even the Scripture itself is among the established donations to meritorious pupils. If this be the fact, or if it be partially the fact, the deficiency will not be made up by the rival institution. Here, then, the Bible Society takes one of its many benevolent stations; and the thousands of young persons, who, as it is assumed, retire from the drilling of the Lancaster serjeants without the panoply of Inspiration, are met before their dispersion by the agents of an association, which scatters among them an antidote to the catechisms and legends of the Romanists, and to the ballads and seditious tracts of the anarchists. Is it possible, that, in the divided and uncultured kingdom of Ireland, should be found Protestant clergymen, who are anxious to annihilate this institution; who, having eyes to perceive the existing calamities of their country, seem resolved to incur the terrible risk of prohibiting the circulation of the Scriptures, when to the ignorance of those records may, to an unknown degree, be attributed the unhappy spiritual state of the Irish population? Is it not notorious that *such* sons of the Reformed Church are welcomed by the papal hierarchy of Ireland as allies; and that, whether they allow it or not, the Catholic clergy are pressing forward to meet them, with no very romantic hope of affecting their restoration to an infallible church?

JUVERNA.

Madras system. If an evil, it is, even in his eyes, not an incurable one; and it is capable of being rendered more innoxious in proportion as it is purified by such considerate men as think more of children's hearts than of their understandings. This purifying process must and will be performed by any person of sound mind, as far as the general regulations of the school will allow him to pursue his object. The extent of his meliorating endeavours may even be very considerable. The superintendent or visiter is superintendent of the master as well as of the pupils. On the supposition that the master possesses an average share of right thinking and docility, and farther that he is generally dependant for his situation and prospects upon the visiter, here is ground somewhat prepared both by principle and personal interest for the reception of good seed; and even the lowest produce has its proportion of value. Still, the master, even under these favourable circumstances, will naturally be influenced by the temptation of hastening onward his scholars, in order, of course, to gain the credit of every party concerned in the establishment. The temptation will assume the guise of duty: and, in truth, he must be an expert analyst who, in such a case, can tell where ambition and conscience may be definitely separated; for, if the boys are to excel, they must speed forward; and if they speed forward, they must be impelled; and the mechanical impulse of the Madras scheme, after all the labours of the apologist, is downright emulation: and by what super-human dexterity will the instructor push his pupils onward along the narrow path, where on one side is seen a moral peril, on the other the apprehension of censure or discredit, if the boys are *defrauded* of stimulus? Under these circumstances arises a case in which the visiter is called upon to teach the teacher; and to remind

him that five hundred possessors of immortal souls are arranged before him, who, from the discipline employed in that room for the next few months or years, will in all likelihood receive impressions which will influence the remainder of their lives.—Whatever is there taught should unquestionably be taught not so much to merely intellectual as to moral and responsible creatures; to those who are so to pass through things temporal, that finally they lose not the things eternal. If this be conceded, the master should in fairness be apprized that an education properly religious may possibly be less visibly progressive than if his instructions began and terminated in merely human learning. The visiter will do well to assure him, that what is lost in point of time or fineness of effect, will be compensated by gain of principles;—I speak on the belief that, according to the usual economy of Providence, no religious labour will finally be in vain. I am aware that this is a kind of prospective education, which cannot be rightly appreciated by any master who does not pursue his object with some portion of Christian feeling: but as far as his moral perceptions reach, so far will the visiter direct them to the paramount importance of giving the children a moral or rather spiritual education; and so far, in the practical details of instruction, will the superintendent inculcate upon his inferior, the necessity of sacrificing the splendour of rapid success to ensure the less sparkling advantage of training up the heirs of eternity for their high destination.

But as the current of the world usually flows, who does not see that the patrons and subordinate managers of these schools must *degrade*, if they resolve to work the Madras engine by slow and measured movements, and of course without any degree of pressure on the safety-valve. I mean, that when men on



Christian principle check the forwardness of clever boys, and give their duller comrades time to come up; in which case the wits must in some measure stand still;—and when they not only effect this balance of power, but possibly retard, to a certain degree, the learned growth of both parties by frequent religious admonition and serious appeals to their consciences;—and when, on the other hand, men acting on worldly motives load the safety-valve, by urging forward their hundreds or half-thousands by all the popular and goading stimulants of emulation;—in these contrasted cases, the spectator who may happen to visit both classes of schools will certainly see in the Christianized establishment less of vividness of character, less of general quickness, brilliancy, and ardour, than in the secularized seminary, where *quocunque modo* human passion, in its varied exhibitions of ambition, vanity, selfishness, and willingness to rise by the fall of others, obtrudes upon the reflecting observer most unpleasant traces of our corrupt original. But, alas! as the majority of observers are unreflecting, few persons will understand what is intended by the *degradation* just alluded to. It must, however, be again and again insisted upon, that whenever the power exists of purifying, in whatever degree, the national schools from worldly motives of action, such power must be exerted, otherwise its possessors will incur the heavy censure of leaving an allowed evil to produce its natural consequences. The introduction of the Madras system is regarded by many thinking persons as a grand but fearful experiment on mankind; and by all as the earnest of some extensive alteration in the structure of civil society. They who survive the next thirty years will be, of course, more competent judges of the question than ourselves, who speculate only about contingent good or evil.

There is one subject which, in my opinion, and specifically with regard

to Ireland, closely connects itself with the matter in discussion; namely, the Bible Society; and so connects itself, that I can scarcely view the two points separately. When all shall eventually be able to read, they will assuredly desire something which may satisfy the new appetite, and books will be found by themselves if not furnished by others.—The pupils of Dr. Bell are generally in the way to procure Bibles and the accredited books of the National Society. But others are educated on what is termed the liberal scale; a scale so liberal, that I do not find that even the Scripture itself is among the established donations to meritorious pupils. If this be the fact, or if it be partially the fact, the deficiency will not be made up by the rival institution. Here, then, the Bible Society takes one of its many benevolent stations; and the thousands of young persons, who, as it is assumed, retire from the drilling of the Lancaster serjeants without the panoply of Inspiration, are met before their dispersion by the agents of an association, which scatters among them an antidote to the catechisms and legends of the Romanists, and to the ballads and seditious tracts of the anarchists. Is it possible, that, in the divided and uncultured kingdom of Ireland, should be found Protestant clergymen, who are anxious to annihilate this institution; who, having eyes to perceive the existing calamities of their country, seem resolved to incur the terrible risk of prohibiting the circulation of the Scriptures, when to the ignorance of those records may, to an unknown degree, be attributed the unhappy spiritual state of the Irish population? Is it not notorious that *such* sons of the Reformed Church are welcomed by the papal hierarchy of Ireland as allies; and that, whether they allow it or not, the Catholic clergy are pressing forward to meet them, with no very romantic hope of affecting their restoration to an infallible church?

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## REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*Report from the Select Committee on the Poor Laws; with the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee; ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, July 14, 1817. London: Clement. 8vo. pp. 240.*

THE moral character of the poor is so much influenced by their external circumstances, that every question connected with those circumstances is an object of vital importance to all who have the true interests of society deeply at heart. We therefore offer no apology for a somewhat extended article on the subject brought before us in this Report.

We know, indeed, that objections are frequently and vehemently urged against all attempts to occupy the minds of those engaged in the sacred function with subjects of this kind. It is said, "Their office is strictly spiritual; and topics of this nature would have a tendency to secularize their minds, and thus eventually to impair, not only their personal holiness, but also their general influence." It may, perhaps, be permitted us, for a moment, to touch upon the several parts of this objection. Of the accuracy of the sentiment conveyed in the former part of it, there can be no doubt. The function of a clergyman is, strictly speaking, spiritual; and any employment which has a real tendency to impair this spirituality strikes a vital blow at the perfection, dignity, and importance of the clerical character. We consider it as no mean benefit belonging to an established church that it enables the minister to pursue the spiritual objects of his profession without any of the distractions ordinarily springing from trade or other mercenary occupations. In this point of view, we cannot but express our regret at a clause in the Bill lately

passed through Parliament, which has a tendency, as we think, to transmute our clergy into agriculturists. We should have heard with far more satisfaction of the intention of the Legislature to increase their incomes, where necessary, than to enlarge their farms. Cicero said of a senator who had engaged in trade, "inquinavit senatum:" and we are equally jealous of all such intrusions on the ministerial office. A congregation will find it difficult to believe that their ministers seek not theirs but them, when they are daily haggling with them for those trifles on which the profit of trade depends.—It is of the first importance to adopt every measure with regard to the church, so as to keep the garments of the priesthood unspotted by the world, and to prevent any other flame from mingling with the pure fire which should burn in the censers of the Lord.

But, admitting all this in its fullest extent, we cannot convince ourselves that studies of the kind brought before us by the present Report—of course, limited and controlled by proper regulations—have by any means the same tendency with trade, or its attendant occupations, to withdraw the mind from the spiritual engagements of the clerical profession. The object in this case is general instead of personal, social instead of selfish: it less easily admits of the operation of sordid motives, offers less excitement to angry tempers, and touches on all sides those great moral questions which are the specific subjects of ministerial attention. There can be no doubt, indeed, that a descent upon the common arena of life will, in this instance as in every other, in some measure increase the temptations of a minister. But this is a necessary tax upon public usefulness in all cases, and should not



drive the minister from the field of duty, but increase his watchfulness and stimulate his devotion when so employed. As to the supposed loss of influence connected with the pursuit of these objects, we should be disposed to maintain that an opposite effect would follow; for with *the poor* themselves, it would enable the clergy to increase their influence by enabling them to become more effectually their benefactors. With *the rich* also, it would enlarge their influence, in the first place, by giving to the clergy a new value and importance in society, and by conveying the impression that good men are not, in the pursuit of another world, enthusiastically disregarding the lawful concerns of this, especially the temporal comfort of their fellow-creatures. We are very far indeed from recommending that a clergyman should embarrass himself with the details of the administration of compulsory relief. On the contrary, there is reason to fear, that an interference with these could not fail to compromise his usefulness. What we would recommend to him, is the study and the seasonable inculcation of just principles of political economy, as well as of such practical plans for relieving the wants, and promoting the comfort of the poor, as would not aggravate the evils they professed to cure. And we conceive, that few circumstances would more tend to raise the general estimate of the clergy, than their carrying into the public meetings of their parishes, that mass of information which their education and rank in society would enable them to collect; and that firm, yet gentle, candid, generous, temper which is the proper fruit of true religion. Their people would then see, what perhaps they have little opportunity of seeing elsewhere, real religion *in action*. The personal watchfulness of the clergy themselves would be increased, their tempers would be improved, their views en-

larged, and their parishioners would learn to listen with increased respect on the Sabbath to the man who in the week had been able to instruct them on points where they least thought themselves to need instruction.—With the actual administration of parochial relief, we repeat, we do not think the clergy have much to do.—It is rather their duty to think for their people, and to form a body of intelligent and active agents, than to do much in this way themselves.

But, if we are thus disposed to blame any minister of the Gospel, who treats with inattention subjects such as those discussed in the present Report, we are also sorry to be obliged to condemn legislators for not endeavouring more largely to avail themselves, in coming to a decision upon these points, of the assistance of such of the parochial clergy as unite a familiar acquaintance with sound principles of political economy with much personal observation.—Many of the legislative errors on these topics arise from the lawgivers being often men of mere speculation. They reason rather from what they hear, than from what they have seen and known. Nor do we speak of this as a species of defect which it is easy to avoid. It is difficult for any class belonging to the more intelligent orders of society, with the exception of *one*, to obtain that free and intimate access to the cottages and bosoms of the poor which can enable them to be accurate judges of their condition. The one class which we except are the resident parochial clergy. They literally “have the poor always with them:” they see them in all possible circumstances: they can trace the influence of every regulation upon their moral character and actual happiness. They look at the law or the institution, not merely in the abstract, and upon paper, but as surrounded by all its consequences.—Now, of such counsellors, supposing them to have fairly

used the advantages of their station, and to be capable of generalizing their facts, it is not easy to over-estimate the importance in all questions of domestic policy. At present, however, few of them are perhaps entitled, on these points, to full confidence. Hume somewhere says, that Father Paul was the only man who was at once an ecclesiastic and a philosopher. This opinion is of course thoroughly tinged with the gall of the historian, and is as inaccurate as his other opinions on topics connected with religion; but, like most other calumnies, it is not *wholly* destitute of support. We earnestly long for the period when the clergy, labouring in the first place to acquire the sacred knowledge essential to their office, shall extend their view to the questions immediately bordering upon religion; and shall thus qualify themselves to contribute to the temporal as well as the spiritual happiness of their country.

Before we proceed to lay before our readers a view of the luminous Report which forms the title to the present article, there is one additional observation which we wish to offer to their notice. The Committee themselves, who framed the Report, have acted with the caution and modesty due to the delicate and intricate questions which engaged their attention. Instead of expressing regret that the shortness of the session prevented their coming to any decision upon the great topics before them, they express their satisfaction at this necessary delay; inasmuch as it released them from all temptations to decide too hastily, or under the peculiar circumstances of the nation during the past year. Now it would be unpardonable presumption for individuals and obscure critics to press on before the legislators of the land—to decide, upon less evidence, than which the Committee have refused to decide upon the fullest evi-

dence which was ever, perhaps, produced to any such court of inquiry. It is our intention, therefore, to maintain, with little exception, the same reserve which has been manifested by our superiors; and rather to present a compact abridgement of their statements, than to offer any of our own. It is for those to cut the knot who have not patience to untie it.—For ourselves, we desire patiently to pursue the investigation, till some satisfactory solution of our national difficulties shall offer itself for general adoption.

The Report opens by stating as a reason why the Committee did not avail themselves of the permission to report their observations from time to time to the House, that they were unwilling to present detached or crude observations upon subjects of such high importance.

In the Report of the Lords' Committee for the same object, a copious account is given of the statutes upon the subject of the poor previous to the reign of Elizabeth. Their general object was to promote the relief of the impotent poor, by the contributions of the church, and by the alms of the charitable; and to discourage the idleness and check the villany of those who sought relief without any real title to it. Many statutes, characterized by the severity of the times, were directed against vagrants of this last character; and a statute in the reign of Edward VI. visited the crime of vagrancy with slavery, mutilation, and death.

The really impotent poor were, on the contrary, permitted to beg within certain limits; and various means were employed to excite the public to relieve them. But these excitements appearing to act both inadequately and partially—pushing on the benevolent perhaps beyond their powers, but leaving the hard-hearted and avaricious altogether uninfluenced—at length, by the 5th Eliz. c. 3,



the justices, after repeated admonition, were empowered, with the churchwardens, &c. to assess such persons, according to their discretion, for a weekly contribution. Thus gradually was established the principle of *compulsory contribution* for the maintenance of the poor. This simple statement of facts, as to the origin of the Poor Laws in our country, clearly shews that these laws were not adopted as a favourite instrument of legislation; but that they were rather forced upon the legislature by the general circumstances of the times, and the exigencies of the case. They were not chosen in preference to voluntary contributions; but because voluntary contributions, to a sufficient extent, could not be raised.

Now it is a subject of speculation which can scarcely fail to suggest itself to an inquiring mind, How comes it that Great Britain should, thus early, have been driven to so disastrous a measure, and that Scotland should not even now be compelled to have recourse to it? One obvious answer is this: In Scotland, the first Reformation of religion was the work, not of the crown, as in England, but of the people. It was not a transaction founded in state policy, and deriving a secular aspect from the combination of court intrigue with religious zeal; but it was founded on a widely extended and deeply rooted conviction, among the nation at large, of its necessity. In England, a violent shock was given to the influence of religion in the minds of the people, by the attack and overthrow of their religious prejudices before a better substitute had been provided. They were divested of the creed they professed, before adequate means had been taken, or indeed could be taken, to diffuse amongst them sound religious knowledge. In Scotland, the evils were of a different class. They arose from an excess of religious zeal on the

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part of the people, and from an earnestness in the prosecution of the work of reform approaching to what may be termed fanaticism. A character was thus formed of great sternness, severe ruggedness, very alien, it may be, in some respects, from the meekness and gentleness of Christianity, but yet favourable to independence of spirit. The impulse thus given to the minds of men was calculated to make them spurn the idea of eleemosynary assistance; and this feeling was extended even to their remote relations and connexions. The early institution, in Scotland, of a system of national education, founded on religion, and superintended by an informed and active resident parochial clergy, while it has served to smooth away some of the roughnesses of the national character, has also kept alive those feelings of independence which form, even in the absence of religious principle, a most powerful barrier against the inroads of pauperism.

But, besides this, the demand and pressure upon benevolence were, probably, less in Scotland than in England. The latter country was more early a commercial and manufacturing country, and was therefore more exposed to vicissitude and to the sudden influx of pauperism on its population; so that while the higher morality of the Scottish peasantry operated powerfully in their favour, this mitigated poverty may not have been without its influence. And as we are not convinced, on the one side, that England, with the same proportion of paupers as the Scotch, *would* have followed the example of Scotland; so neither are we sure, on the other, that Scotland, with the same proportion of paupers as England, would have readily pursued her present practice. We are strengthened in these doubts by observing, that where the English, as in many of the agricultural districts, might support their poor by voluntary con-

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tributions, no attempt is made to do it; and that Scotland, in many cases where her circumstances approximate to those of England, has, most unhappily, as we conceive, been led to adopt the practice of this country. But, to return to the Report—

The Committee give the following statement of the Act of Elizabeth.

“This statute enacts, that ‘the churchwardens and overseers’ shall take order from time to time (with the consent of two or more justices) for setting to work the children of all such whose parents shall not be thought able to keep and maintain their children; and also for setting to work all such persons, married or unmarried, having no means to maintain them, and who use no ordinary or daily trade of life to get their living by; and also to raise by taxation, &c. ‘a convenient stock of flax, &c. to set the poor on work;’ and also competent sums of money for and towards the necessary relief of the lame, impotent, old, blind, and such other among them, being poor and not able to work.” pp. 6, 7.

The Report next proceeds to state the truly melancholy results of this system of compulsory provision for the poor. It tended to abate the industry of the labouring classes, while it promoted their increase: it was calculated to produce habits of improvidence, taking away the natural impulse to exertion and frugality. By making poverty the title to relief, it encouraged the growth of the misery it was designed to alleviate. Being compulsory, it divested relief of the character, and of all the beneficial effects, of benevolence.

“Proceeding from no impulse of charity, it creates no feelings of gratitude, and not unfrequently engenders dispositions and habits calculated to separate rather than unite the interests of the higher and lower orders of the community: even the obligations of natural affection are no longer left to their own impulse, but the mutual support of the nearest relations has been actually enjoined by a positive law, which the authority of magistrates is continually required to

enforce. The progress of these evils, which are inherent in the system itself, appears to have been favoured by the circumstances of modern times, by an extension of the law in practice, and by some deviations from its most important provisions.” pp. 7, 8.

The Committee next allude to various points on which it will be unnecessary to dwell; namely, the melancholy impression produced upon their own minds by the contemplation of the increased and increasing evils of this system—the deep anxiety they have felt to discover some adequate remedy for them—the attention they have bestowed on every plan proposed to them—and the defects in the returns required from the parishes by an Act of 1815, which have left the information of the Committee incomplete.

They then enter upon a statement of the rapid and uniform increase of the assessment and expenditure for the poor. In the year 1776, the sum expended was 1,556,804*l*. The average expenditure of 1783, 1784, 1785, was 2,004,238*l*. In 1813, the sum expended was 2,467,965*l*; in 1815, it amounted to 5,072,028*l*.—Considerably more was raised in these years; in 1815, 7,068,999*l*.—The excess was spent in church and county rate, militia, &c.

In order to meet this increasing expenditure, it has been suggested, by some writers on these subjects, that whereas the assessment is now levied on land and houses alone, it should be extended (as the Act of Elizabeth appears to warrant) to *personal property of all kinds*. With regard to some species of personal property, it may be stated that, if the assessment has not been extended to them, it has arisen only from the difficulty of ascertaining the amount of the property to be taxed without investing the assessors with inquisitorial powers, of such a nature as the exigencies of war alone have ever



induced the legislature to grant; and repeating an experiment which had already failed in the case of the original land tax. The important subject of *taxing funded property* for the relief of the poor, is noticed in the Report, and the injustice and impolicy of such a measure fully shewn. The assessment would, indeed, be easy in any given proportion; but how is it to be distributed among the different parishes of England and Wales, to which the funds have no local relation? It would be a violation of good faith to the public creditor, if, while sums at interest on other securities were practically exempt from this tax, money lent to the state should alone be subject to it, although by law the payment of the dividend is secured "free from all taxes, charges, and impositions." Besides, are foreigners, or stockholders in Ireland and Scotland, to be assessed? In short, while the injustice is palpable, the difficulties would be insurmountable.

The next question noticed by the Committee, is, whether it would be desirable to rate every individual to the Poor Rate in *proportion to the number of hands employed by him*.—The great objections to this proposal are, the necessary discouragements it would give to the employment of workmen—the consequent difficulties of the labouring class—and the inevitable increase which must thence arise of the very evils which the proposal is designed to remedy.

The Committee then proceed to consider certain complaints of inequality in the mode of assessing property in large towns; and they recommend, that, in consequence of the immense loss sustained through the insolvency or knavery of lodgers in petty houses, the *house-owner*, in the case of houses of a certain rent, *should be compelled to pay the assessment*. Various petitions have reached the House, praying the adoption

of such a measure. The only strong objection that has been stated to it is, that, if adopted, individuals perhaps residing at a distance, so as not to be able in any way to control the expenditure of a parish, might nevertheless have to pay the rate. But to this it may be answered, that no beneficial control of the expenditure can possibly arise from those who now *do* or *ought* to pay the rate. But while the Committee admit it to be exceedingly desirable to equalize the Poor's Rate as much as possible, they state their deliberate conviction, that, if new funds are provided, a facility of expenditure will also be created; and that,

"unless some efficacious check be interposed, there is every reason to think that the amount of the assessment will continue, as it has done, to increase, till, at a period more or less remote, according to the progress the evil has already made in different places, it shall have absorbed the profits of the property on which the rate may have been assessed, producing thereby the neglect and ruin of the land, and the waste or removal of other property, to the utter subversion of that happy order of society so long upheld in these kingdoms." p. 16.

The Committee next present us with a curious table; from which it appears, that the increase of pauperism, even in districts almost purely agricultural, has been of the most gigantic nature. For example, the county of Hereford "expended on poor, in 1776, 10,593*l.*; average expenditure in 1783, 1784, 1785, 16,727*l.*; in 1803, 48,067*l.*; in 1815, 59,255*l.*" The causes of this rapid increase of pauperism they conceive to be, mainly, the annihilation of that spirit of independence and self-support which checked this evil at an earlier period. The fear of the work-house, which operated for a time, has now ceased to act; partly through the number of paupers vastly exceeding the capacity of the work-house, and partly from the power given to

the magistrate of relieving the poor without their entering the work-house. From these circumstances, and the probability that the children of paupers will also be paupers, the ratio of increase is likely to be every day more rapid.

The Report then proceeds to offer some observations on the curious, and, as in other circumstances it would have been called, merely speculative question, as to the point at which, from the pressure of the Poor's Rate, a total stoppage of agriculture might be anticipated; the land-owners and farmers refusing any longer to cultivate the soil. It is obvious that this would take place whenever the assessment nearly approached the gross rental of the land: and that some such instances even now exist, may be collected from the following extract.

"The consequences which are likely to result from this state of things are clearly set forth in the petition from the parish of Wombridge, in Salop, which is fast approaching to this state. The petitioners state, that 'the annual value of land, mines, and houses in this parish, is not sufficient to maintain the numerous and increasing poor, even if the same were to be set free of rent; and that these circumstances will inevitably compel the occupiers of lands and mines to relinquish them, and the poor will be without relief or any known mode of obtaining it, unless some assistance be speedily afforded them.' And your Committee apprehend, from the petitions before them, that this is one only of many parishes that are fast approaching to a state of dereliction." p. 20.

Some observations succeed, which are designed to resist the notion, that, by some extension of the assessment, or some modification of the plan of collecting it, or some limitation of the expenditure, without any material change of the whole system, its future difficulties may be overcome. It is shewn that an increase of assessment beyond a certain point would only increase the number of

poor, by depriving their employers of the means of setting them to work;—that although the legislature has endeavoured, in some instances, by local acts and otherwise, to limit the influence of parishes, necessity has already shewn itself too strong for law;—and that any participation of the burden of assessments with neighbouring parishes, whilst it lessens the weight on one part of the community, only does so by removing it to another part. The plan of a "*national assessment*" has, indeed, been proposed; but the Committee justly object to this—that it would incalculably increase the evil, by putting the funds under the controul of those who did not, perhaps, contribute to raise them. It would also be altogether impossible to devise any adequate means of checking the demands on such a fund, when every excess in parochial disbursements would be merged in the general expenditure of the empire.

The Committee next dilate upon the importance of endeavouring to apply the only radical remedy for the existing evils; namely—*the creation of a spirit of virtuous independence in the lower orders*. They state with justice, that the transition to a more wholesome system can be accomplished only by the gradual restoration of a feeling of reliance upon their own industry, rather than upon the parochial assessments.

"The labouring classes can only be plunged deeper and more hopelessly into the evils of pauperism, by the constant application of additional sums of money to be distributed by the Poor Rate. True benevolence and real charity point to other means, which your Committee cannot so well express as in the emphatic language of Mr. Burke: 'Patience, labour, frugality, sobriety, and religion, should be recommended to them: all the rest is downright fraud.'" p. 21.

After this, they advert, with much satisfaction, to the establishment of



"*Saving Banks*," and of "*Benefit Societies*," as to institutions having a powerful tendency to produce this spirit. With regard to benefit societies, in particular, they appear to have the design of submitting to Parliament a proposal for enabling parishes to offer to the members of these societies a larger benefit than the sum contributed by themselves would fairly purchase; and to place, by a premium, those who have neglected to make themselves members of these institutions on the footing of advantage on which they would have stood, if they had commenced their contributions at an earlier age.

To every proposal which has a tendency to multiply saving banks, and at once to multiply and to regulate benefit societies, every thinking man must immediately give his concurrence. The saving banks are already taken under the protection of Parliament, and are scarcely susceptible either of improvement or of abuse—unless some enthusiast should (which is very unlikely) by way of bonus to the institution, offer to any class of contributors a rate of interest, which the national funds would not allow him to make good. But the benefit societies, however valuable, need, in numerous cases, to be absolutely re-modelled before they can be considered as rendering an unequivocal benefit to the community. They are now, with few exceptions, held at public-houses—are so planned as to make drunkenness an integral part of them—and may fairly be considered as societies for the benefit, not of the subscribers, but the publican. They admit, however, of obvious and radical amendments; and perhaps the plan recommended in the Report would be the best security for their due administration.

The Committee, having stated their observations as to the assessments of the Poor Rate, go on to give their view of "*the purposes for which it is authorized to be levied.*"

Following the fundamental law of Elizabeth, they consider its proper object to be,

"1st. Setting to work the children of all those whose parents shall not be thought able to maintain them.

"2nd. Setting to work all persons having no means to maintain them, and using no ordinary or daily trade to get their bread by.

"3rd. The necessary relief of the lame, impotent, old, blind, and such other among them as are poor and not able to work, as well as for apprenticing such children as are before described." p. 27.

The Committee complain, that, while the statute directs the children of the poor to be *set to work*, the general practice has been to give money to the parents without any provision for that purpose. They propose, therefore, founding their project upon reasonings, quoted from a Report of the Board of Trade, drawn up by the celebrated Mr. Locke, in 1697—that, wherever a pauper applies for relief on account of the number of his children, the burdensome children shall be taken from their parents, lodged in a parochial school, which shall combine work with reading, &c., and there be taught, clothed, and fed; and that no other relief shall be given on account of such children as are of a fit age to be thus instructed and maintained.

We must confess that we regard this proposition, though recommended by Mr. Locke, as the most questionable part of the Report, and one which could only be justified on the ground that we are reduced to an alternative of evils, of which we have only to choose the least. We consider the Committee, indeed, as proposing this plan merely as some palliative of the enormous mischiefs, both economical and moral, of the existing system. But we are clear, that, even if it were less exceptionable than we feel it to be in argument, proper machinery could not be found for giving effect to the benevolent

views of the Committee. And even if we should admit that the children would be benefited in health and morals by the change, and that the state would thereby obtain a more independent and virtuous class of citizens; yet is it certain that the plan would yield, in all cases, the required relief to the parents seeking parochial aid on account of their children? Where, for instance, a pauper seeks relief for any number of children above three, it often happens, that those of them who can work are employed by himself, and yield him assistance in providing for those who cannot. If those are taken from him who are able to aid his labours, his state will not be better, but worse than before.

The Committee, then, submit for the consideration of the House,

"whether, when the demand for labour may have revived, it may not safely be provided, That, from and after a certain time, no relief shall be extended to any child whose father, being living, is under years of age;—a principle, which, by altering the age from time to time, might, if it should be thought desirable, be carried still further into operation. It may also be provided, with a similar view, That, from and after a specified time, no relief shall be provided for any child whose father, being living, has not above children under years of age." pp. 32, 33.

This proposition involves in it the main questions in dispute between Mr. Malthus, with not a few wise heads, on the one side, and a still more numerous, though less distinguished, body of objectors and assertors on the other. Certain it is, that, if the Poor Laws are to be done away, we must not wait for their dying a natural death. All, however, will admit that, if they are to die by violence, slow poison would be the best expedient for that purpose: and it is on this principle that the Committee have framed their advice.

The Report, in proceeding to one of the most difficult points involved

in the present discussion—we mean *the providing employment for the poor*—begins with adverting to the provisions of the existing law on the subject, which directs the overseers

"to take order for setting to work all such persons, married or unmarried, as have no means to maintain them, and use no ordinary or daily trade of life to get their bread by." p. 33.

The first question to be settled with regard to this clause, is, what class of persons is meant by those "using no ordinary or daily trade of life to get their bread by?" The magistrates have usually compelled parishes to give employment to *every man* applying for work; but it is the opinion of the Committee, that persons *usually working at any employment, but for a time out of work*, are not included in this classification.—And it is unquestionable, that, if the Act be interpreted to mean all unemployed persons, the law requires that of the parish which, in very many instances, it is wholly impossible it should perform. It is obvious, that, by the sudden cessation of any particular employment, too many labourers may be thrown out of work to be provided by the parish with other kinds of occupation. It is also obvious, that where, from any cause, the number of labourers exceeds the demand for labour, the compulsory employment of one labourer can only serve to throw another out of work. Nor is it less obvious, that an expectation held out to every labourer, that the parish will provide him with that which it is impossible to provide—namely, with work at all times, and under all circumstances—has a tendency to promote imprudent marriages, to destroy habits of economy, and to lessen the laudable desire of the labourer, by a diligent performance of his duties, to deserve and secure permanent occupation with his present employer. On these



grounds, the Committee are disposed to recommend that *no work should in future be supplied by the parish except to those already so supplied*; and who might be permitted to continue until they could provide for themselves; or, if the change likely to be wrought by this provision be thought too rapid, that it should be enacted that none shall in future be provided with employment who are between the ages of eighteen and thirty, "and then, after a certain lapse of time, that none between sixteen and thirty-five, forty, and so on until the object shall be gradually effected."

The Committee further recommend *parish-farms* as, upon the whole, a preferable mode of providing labour, if labour is to be provided, because it seems in some degree to furnish a test as to the disposition of the applicant to work. They notice with, decided approbation, the practice of letting very small portions of land to industrious labourers to cultivate on their own account, and finally suggest the necessity of offering every facility for seeking employment wherever it can be found, even out of the realm. And doubtless, where the population continues to press hard upon the means of subsistence, in the demand for labour emigration is the only effectual escape from famine, suffering, or death.

The Report justly deprecates the practice of compelling individuals to receive labourers in rotation, and paying them in part or altogether out of a parish rate, except under the strictest regulations;—as, besides the many other objections to the plan, it is plain that, by a little management, a vestry of farmers might thus get their work done at the general expense of the parish.

On the subject of *work-houses* the Committee contend, that, with all their evils, they are to be preferred in their general results to the system of maintaining the poor in their own houses, in as much as they are the strongest existing check to the

growing spirit of dependence on parochial aid. They also strongly urge the measure of enabling every parish or township to give a salary to a person in the capacity of *permanent overseer*, or superintendent, who shall be well acquainted with business, and with the poor; and also be at leisure to do the parish justice, and unlikely to be biased by personal considerations. The expediency of the measure is maintained by an appeal to various populous parishes where the experiment has been tried with much success. Select vestries are also recommended, which may be authorized to exercise, in the first instance, some of those powers which are now delegated exclusively to justices of the peace. On these propositions we have only to remark, that as parishes are merely to be *enabled*, and not *compelled*, to make such appointments, (which, in the case of small parishes, would often be wholly unnecessary,) there seems no fair objection to their adoption; at the same time, we think with the Committee, that if the well-informed gentry and tradesmen of a parish would exercise an enlightened and active superintendence, this would go farther to lessen the existing evils than any other measure which, under the present system, could be adopted.

The Report next calls the attention of the House to that fruitful source of litigation the *laws of settlement*. After explaining the present state of those laws, and the various inconvenient, injurious, and even oppressive effects resulting from them, they propose to simplify the law so much as to reduce the subjects of litigation to a very few questions of fact, while the maintenance of those who want relief, would be placed upon a far more just and equitable footing, and the comfort and happiness of the poor themselves would be consulted in the greatest degree.

"With these views, your Committee recommend, that in future any person residing three years in a parish, without being absent more than                      months in each

year, and without being in any manner chargeable, should obtain a settlement in such parish; and to prevent as far as possible this fact becoming the source of such litigation as frequently arises, from the difficulty of ascertaining the most simple facts, by the evidence of the paupers themselves, it might be permitted that, after such residence was completed, a deposition of the fact might be made by the party before two justices, after notice given to the overseers. Your Committee are persuaded, that if service was required to be combined with residence, it would not only render the provision complicated, but would prevent a settlement being acquired within either of the parishes in which the person serves or resides. And it is recommended, that no person, from a day to be named, shall acquire a settlement by renting a tenement, serving an office, hiring and service for a year, apprenticeship or estate. With respect to such poor persons who, not being natives of England, may be without a settlement, the influx of them to particular places has been so great and oppressive, that the Committee think provision should be made for passing such persons, upon their application for parochial relief, to the nearest ports or places, from which they may return to their native country; but that any native of the British Empire shall acquire a settlement in any parish in which he may have resided five years without being chargeable." pp. 45, 46.

To this proposition we can see no objection; and we are happy to understand that it meets with the general approbation of those disinterested persons who are most conversant with the subject. The principal objectors are probably our younger advocates who have hitherto practised their infant weapons in causes of this kind. The law of settlement is the very life of the quarter sessions, and of juvenile advocates there. But then they must remember that a want of work is the common calamity of the country at the present moment; and as good patriots, they will be disposed, like other labourers, should this change be made, to turn their attention to some other and more peaceable and productive

employment. Or should this country afford inadequate scope for the exertion of their talents, the world is still before them. They may migrate to the banks of the Niger or the Oronooko, and there diffuse, among the tribes who inhabit their banks, those principles of legislation which have laid the basis of our national grandeur and triumphs. We sincerely wish our young adventurers a pleasant voyage, and much success; and we ardently hope that our belligerent parishes will not refuse to return to the relations of peace and amity, and be satisfied, more ingloriously indeed, but perhaps not less usefully, to spend upon their farms or their poor the 287,000*l.* which they last year expended in litigation.

The Committee then suggest the addition of a few subsidiary, and certainly very judicious, regulations to the grand change which they have proposed in the law of settlement, and which, if it should be found necessary to persevere in the present system, we trust will also be adopted.

The Report is concluded by a paragraph too honourable to the wisdom and discretion of the Committee, not to be quoted by those who feel as sincerely indebted as we do for their patient and laborious investigation of these complicated and difficult questions.

"Your Committee have thus stated to the House the result of a laborious investigation, which has been protracted to a period of the session which precludes their proposing at present such legislative enactments as it might be thought fit to adopt. They cannot, however, regret this circumstance; for, conceiving that the House expected at their hands a general revision of the whole system of our Poor Laws, in which, though it be not difficult to point out inconveniences and mischiefs, yet the task of providing practical remedies is so arduous, that your Committee is persuaded, that even more time and labour would not have been mispent in considering fur-



ther the various provisions of the law, and the numerous proposals which, from different quarters, have been submitted to their judgment. The House also will not be called upon to adopt any of the suggestions of this report, till an ample opportunity will have been afforded to correct any errors in the judgment of your Committee, or to confirm their opinions: and this delay will above all be salutary, if the lapse of time, aided by a more favourable season, should restore the kingdom in some degree to its wonted and healthy state.—For, though a period of depression and distress may bring out more prominently the weak and unsound parts of the system, it is obvious that the application of the most effectual remedies is, at such a moment, of more than ordinary difficulty. And if it should be the pleasure of the House that the consideration of this subject should be resumed in the next session of Parliament, no inconsiderable advantage will be derived from that mass of information contained in the returns in 1815, to which they have not yet had access, and from a further valuable accession of detailed accounts of the admirable practice of Scotland.” P. 50.

The extent to which this article has already proceeded will prevent our noticing the mass of highly interesting evidence annexed to their Report, and the valuable matter subjoined in the Appendix. Other opportunities may offer themselves for our returning to this subject; and we hope to avail ourselves of them. In the mean time, having thus brought our abstract to a close, our readers will, perhaps, accept from us a few concluding remarks, which are designed rather as preparatory for the future investigation of these momentous topics, than with a view to any precipitate decision of them at the present moment. The propriety of stating these remarks has been suggested to us chiefly by observing the wide operation of certain dicta upon these points, which would go far to disappoint all hopes of successful inquiry.

In the first place, we find some persons disposed resolutely to contend, that “the evil is incurable—

that committees assemble, and critics write in vain—and that, therefore, our wisdom and duty are to leave things precisely as they are.” To such persons we would say, it is absolutely impossible to leave things as they are; for, unhappily, the evil itself is not stationary, but is advancing, with giant strides, to the destruction of agriculture and trade—to the confusion of all ranks of society—to the annihilation of the rich, and the rapid and fatal multiplication of the poor. If, then, the case really admits of no remedy, the national destiny may be considered as, in a great measure, fixed; and Great Britain must be contented to descend from her high pedestal, and take her station, amidst the people of Europe, as a nation of paupers. We do not mean that she as yet *approximates* to that state: but, upon the present system, she rapidly *tends* to it. It is, therefore, of imperious consequence, that the intelligence of the country should be assiduously and anxiously occupied in inquiring into the possibility of a cure. We do not dispute the difficulty of discovering and applying a remedy to evils so extensive, and of such long standing; but yet we are far from despairing that a remedy will be found. Nay, we would go further, and say, that the remedy, to a certain extent, is already discovered and developed in the present Report. The disease of the nation is evidently an alarming *decay of the principle of self support*. The remedy, therefore, obviously is the *gradual restoration of that principle*. The national constitution has been relaxed; it must be braced, and stimulated to a discharge of its proper functions. In the mean time, it appears to us no small advance towards a cure, that we have become acquainted with our disorder. The nation, for a long course of years, has ranked the Poor Laws amidst the pillars of its grandeur and stability. It

is of vast importance, therefore, that Committees of both Houses of Parliament should have detected and exposed this error; that they should have shewn that the supposed pillar has rather burdened us by its weight, than sustained us by its strength; and it is to be hoped that some strong hand will, in time, bring it to the ground.

Another not unfashionable opinion is, that although much *might* be done to correct the existing evil, the present Committees have been ill chosen; and that they have neither done much, nor can be expected to do it. Now, as to doing much, it is to be recollected that the Committees have been thinking and legislating for fifteen millions of people. They have been handling questions which involve many of the highest interests of a mighty empire. They have had to encounter a system backed by the prejudices of three centuries, and which, contemporaneous with all our national triumphs and glory, rarely fails to rally, in its defence, those whose patriotism happens to be much stronger than their judgment. And yet, such is the decisive character of the Report which we have been considering, that, should its suggestions ever be matured into laws, the whole of this ancient and much venerated system must fall to the ground. But the truth is, that we honour each Committee full as much for what it has *not*, as for what it has, done. It has not trifled on a serious subject: it has not hastened to rash conclusions: it has not decided when the agitated state of the country scarcely left us any fixed basis for calculation: it has not fancied that so complicated a case admitted of a simple cure: it has not proposed to Parliament some empirical remedy, which should operate as a *panacea* on the national evils flowing from this source; but in all its recommendations, it has proceeded with cautious steps, and

has never been induced to quit the sure ground of principle and experiment.

If, however, the Committees in both Houses had accomplished no more than merely unmasking the evil of the Poor Laws—if they had not issued a single page except that in which they denounce the system of compulsory support as the origin of a great proportion of our national distresses—they deserve, in our judgment, to be thanked as benefactors to their country.

A third class of objectors, of whom we feel strongly disposed to complain, are those who are determined *to apply to the existing mischief no remedy which appears to have any, even contingent, evil associated with it.* They forget that we must, in all changes and in every human institution, compound for a certain measure of contingent evil. Having determined that any system or regulation is so bad that it *must* be got rid of, the possibility of a certain measure of contingent evil is not to be considered as a valid objection to the new plan or arrangement by which it may be proposed to supplant it. If a limb is mortifying, though it is very possible that bark and wine may give the patient a headach, the physician, nevertheless, administers them. If a house is on fire, though it is extremely probable that the engines will spoil the hangings, the firemen proceed in their operations. And thus is it in national maladies. A certain risk must be incurred, to cure a positive mischief. We must hazard a limb to save a life.

With the statement of another popular error upon this subject, we shall conclude our remarks. Few questions, which respect the interests either of individuals or of nations, are points of mere regulation and calculation, as mere politicians are sometimes apt to imagine. Most of them, when reduced to their ele-



ments, appear to involve more of *moral* considerations than was perhaps at first sight apprehended; and when legislators, in their zeal to exalt their own craft, neglect these moral considerations, nations seldom fail to pay the cost of their shortsightedness and secularity. Let us take the instance of the Poor Laws. This system would appear to have been constructed without the smallest reference to its moral influence upon the character of the poor. It was a mere matter of calculation as to the best means of extorting a given sum from the pockets of the rich. Its effects in deteriorating the national character, in destroying industry and independence, and a spirit of forethought, and self-denial, and economy, were never contemplated; or, if contemplated, were deemed a feather in the scale. And what has been the result? We have let loose, with one hand, the tide which we were endeavouring to dam up with the other. We have, in our attempt to feed one pauper, been instrumental in making a thousand. In constructing laws, we have neglected principles. In scheming for the body, we have forgotten the mind. The result of our negligence is the growth of the very evil we affected to cure, and that to a size which threatens to overwhelm our national interest and happiness. But we must derive from these considerations something more than the duty of repentance for our past mistake, and must learn the duty of reformation for the future. If our legislators continue to conceive, and to act upon the conception, that the present evils are to be remedied by mere civil or municipal regulations—that they are to be routed by a piece of parchment, or annihilated by a magistrate—they will fall into the same error which has misled their predecessors. They will be acting upon men as machines, when they should deal with them as moral agents. The

poor are suffering under a deep *moral* disease—a sort of paralysis of all independence, and self-denial, and prudence. Acts of Parliament cannot touch this disorder. The parish doctor cannot cure it: “More need they the divine than the physician.” It is only by the implantation of a new moral principle—by teaching them the duties assigned to them by the Almighty, of “getting their own bread,” and “doing their own business,” and “working with their own hands,”—that the cure can be accomplished. It is only, in short, by endeavouring to graft in their minds the principles and precepts of that book which not a few are afraid to put into their hands, unless they themselves may stand by to interpret it, that we can hope for that species of moral regeneration of which the nation stands in need.

But then, perhaps, it may be asked, “And how is Parliament to promote this end?” We answer, first, by removing those checks to national improvement which now take refuge under its wing;—by lessening the number of alehouses; by limiting and controlling the issue of spirit-licenses; by abolishing that licensed abomination the lottery; by watching carefully over the residence of the clergy; by multiplying national churches and national schools; by lending their high name and personal influence to all institutions which have a manifest tendency to promote the growth of religion and morality; by assisting to stifle the outcry of bigotry, to advance real merit, to confer lofty stations upon those only who will best discharge their duties; by planning and acting zealously upon the principle that “righteousness exalteth a nation,” “and that happy is the people who have the Lord for their God.” Nor do we despair to see Parliament rising more and more to the standard we have here presumed to place before them. There are those who can remember when a

principle drawn expressly from the pages of Scripture would have even encountered a sneer in that assembly. But we thank God, our lot is fallen in happier times—in times when the words of that book have been received, not as the word of man but as the word of God; when they have assisted to strike off the chains of African slavery, and have purchased for the millions of India the prize of the Gospel, the charter of eternal life and glory. May the walls of Parliament for ever echo to such principles! May he who almost first introduced them there long continue to lend them the sanction of his splendid eloquence, and unsullied character! And may younger politicians take courage to emulate his high example! May they hasten to give us some indubitable pledge, that when the heavy visitations of Providence shall take him, or others like him, from us, new champions will be found, with the same courage and Christian simplicity, to fight the battles “of the Lord,” the battles of humanity and justice, of liberty and religion, in a British House of Commons!

*A Sermon, preached at the Cathedral Church of Chester on the twenty third of November, 1817; being the Sunday after the Interment of her late Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte Augusta.* By G. H. LAW, D. D. F. R. and A. S. Lord Bishop of Chester. London: Rodwell and Martin. 1818. 8vo. pp. 19.

*The Voice of God to Britain: a Sermon, on the deeply lamented Death of her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte, preached on Wednesday, November 19, the Day of her Funeral.* By T. SCOTT, Rector of Aston Sandford, Bucks. London: Seeley. 1817. 8vo. pp. 23.

*A Sermon delivered in the Tron Church, Glasgow, on Wednesday, November 19, 1817, the Day of the*

*Funeral of her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte of Wales.* By T. CHALMERS, D. D. Minister of the Tron Church, Glasgow. Glasgow: Smith and Son. 1817, 8vo. pp. 44.

*A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Harrow on the Hill, on Sunday, November 9, 1817, on the sudden and lamented Death of Her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte.* By J. W. CUNNINGHAM, A. M. late Fellow of St. John's, Cambridge; Vicar of Harrow; and Domestic Chaplain to the Right Hon. Lord Northwick. London: Hatchard. 1817. 8vo. pp. 27.

*Silent Submission to the Divine Will: a Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Blandford Forum, Dorsetshire, on Wednesday, November 19, 1817, being the Day appointed for the Funeral of her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte.* By the Rev. C. J. HOARE, A. M. Vicar of Blandford Forum, and late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. London: Hatchard. 1817. 8vo. pp. 23.

*A Sermon, occasioned by the Death of her late Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte of Wales, preached at Harvey-Lane, Leicester, November 16, 1817.* By R. HALL, M. A. London: Button and Son. 1818. 8vo. pp. 63.

*Private Sorrows and public Calamities viewed in Connexion with the Shortness of Time: a Sermon occasioned by the Death of her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte Augusta of Wales, and preached before the University of Cambridge, on Sunday, November 23, 1817.—* By G. C. GORHAM, M. A. Fellow of Queen's College. Cambridge. 1817. 8vo. pp. 24.

*A Sermon, occasioned by the lamented Death of her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte of Wales, preached in the Church of the United Parishes of Christ Church and St. Leonard Foster Lane, on Wednes-*



day, November 19, 1817. By the Rev. S. CROWTHER, M.A. Vicar and Rector, London. 8vo. pp. 20. *The Frailty of Human Life illustrated; and the Providential Agency of God improved: in two Sermons, occasioned by the lamented Death of her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte of Wales, delivered at Watworth, on Sunday the 16th and Wednesday the 19th of November.* By G. CLAYTON. London: Black and Co. 1817. 8vo. pp. 48.

THAT the mournful event to which these discourses have reference—an occurrence appalling to our fears and sympathies, awakening our regrets, depressing our national confidence, raising up on every side images of woe, and terror, and dismay, telling us of the vanity of honour, the frailty of youth, the brevity of worldly distinctions, the impotence of health, and beauty, and splendour to ransom their possessor from the grave;—that an event such as this should have summoned the ministers of religion to their posts, to improve the awful visitation, was a circumstance easily to be expected. And what a field had they for their pious labours! Where could they have selected from the volumes of history or the fictions of imagination, a theme so fraught with all that is admonitory and affecting? Where could the eloquent look for a topic so capable of inspiring and sustaining the highest fervours of thought and language? Whither could the pensive moralist turn for so powerful a demonstration of the truth of the inspired aphorism, *Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities; all is vanity?* Whence could the sacred preacher hope to derive so new, so touching, an illustration of all which he daily inculcates, and which men daily forget—the shortness of time—the importance of the soul—the need of redemption—the nature of the preparation for eternity? In a word, when did the voice of Providence,

the sympathy of highly-wrought feeling, the tenderness of regret, the melting of sorrow, so persuasively concur to open men's hearts to sacred impressions, as on that day when this great nation, clothed in the vestments of unaffected grief, voluntarily and almost instinctively assembled themselves in the temples of the Almighty, to acknowledge the Hand that inflicted the bereavement? That much should be said on such an occasion, indicative of respect and loyalty towards the throne, of piety and humiliation before God, of Christian affection for the souls of men, and a desire to render the direful stroke beneficial to our immortal interests, was fully to be anticipated. But to have anticipated the depth and poignancy of the grief, and the extent to which the pathos of the moment would be carried, would have been impossible. Without concurrence or mutual understanding, and ignorant of the mode in which the painful event would be treated by their brethren in other places, the ministers of Christ, of all denominations, were unanimously pointing out the extent of the calamity, and the need of national humiliation; and were summoning, from the tomb of departed youth and grandeur, every possible incentive to repentance towards God, to faith in a Redeemer, to newness of life, to preparation for an eternal world. The desire of turning the subject to practical account, rather than of spending the invaluable moments of public feeling in unavailing regrets and declamatory panegyric, seems to have been almost universally prevalent; and certainly the twenty or thirty sermons over which we have glanced, out of perhaps three or four times that number published on the occasion, have tended to raise our ideas both of the piety and ability which at the present moment characterize the British pulpit. Of course, it will not be in our power to notice, even in the slightest

manner, a tenth part of these productions, which even already are hastening fast to silence and oblivion. We should, however, scarcely perform our duty, and certainly should greatly violate our own feelings, if we did not rescue a few at least from the general mass; and this, if for nothing else, that our pages may bear witness to the public feeling excited on that memorable occasion.

Our chief difficulty in performing this labour is selection; and we feel assured, that both our readers and the various authors who have published their discourses, will be ready rather to pity than blame us if we have erred in our choice. Without, therefore, professing critical accuracy of discrimination, we have placed at the head of this article a few of those which happened more immediately to fall in our way, or which were acknowledged by all parties to possess unusual merit. We have every reason to believe that several which we have been obliged to omit are quite equal to some which we have noticed;—a general acknowledgment which we think ought to appease those of the “genus irritabile” who might have expected, and perhaps justly, that their names should have adorned the present article. To avoid still further all invidious comparison, which our readers will see is no easy matter when surrounded by such a constellation of friends, we shall do little more than make a few extracts from the various discourses before us, leaving to others to settle their comparative excellences and defects.

The first series of extracts which we propose to give, relate to the character and circumstances of the illustrious personage whose untimely loss we lament. We shall introduce them with a pleasing reference made to her when quite a child by the then Bishop of London, the late Dr. Beilby Porteus.

“Yesterday, (the 6th of August,

1801,) I passed a very pleasant day at Shrewsbury House, near Shooters’ Hill, the residence of the Princess Charlotte of Wales. The day was fine, the prospect extensive and beautiful, taking a large reach of the Thames, which was covered with vessels of various sizes and descriptions. We saw a good deal of the Princess: she is a most captivating and engaging child; and, considering the high station she may hereafter fill, a most interesting and important one. She repeated to me several of her hymns with great correctness and propriety; and, on being told that when she went to Southend in Essex, (as she afterwards did for the benefit of sea-bathing,) she would be in my diocese, she fell down on her knees, and begged my blessing. I gave it to her with all my heart, and with my earnest secret prayers to God that she might adorn her illustrious station with every Christian grace; and that, if ever she became the queen of this truly great and glorious country, she might be the means of diffusing virtue, piety, and happiness, through every part of her dominions.”—*From the Journal of Dr. Porteus, late Bishop of London.*

It would appear from the following descriptions of the Princess at a riper age, that these “secret earnest prayers” would, in all probability, have been fulfilled.

“Can I venture here, in the first place, to glance towards the tomb, and for a single moment to trace beyond its iron barrier ‘a nation’s dearest treasure and fondest hope?’ Let me only say on this point—for I dare not dwell upon it—that every day’s intelligence gives us fresh ground of belief for this all-important fact, that our beloved Princess was prepared to die. I speak from the most unquestionable authority, when I state, that for years past her consideration had been awake to subjects of a moral and religious nature; and that from the time she had acted for herself, she had manifested a desire, (I use the very expression of those around her,) ‘to do always what was right.’ One of the last books she

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ever read with her venerable preceptor, was one written expressly for her use by a person of great celebrity, and equally eminent for piety and talents; and she read it with the deepest attention and the highest commendations. The religious character and judicious habits of her amiable, and now doubly interesting, because bereaved Consort, the man of her choice, are well-known. And with him she had voluntarily retired from the gayeties of public life: with him she had ever acted in private under the influence of a most harmonious and undivided affection: with him she had knelt around the altar of family devotion,—for they had family-prayer; with him, or with his approbation, she had contributed largely and in person, to the wants of the poor around their secluded dwelling; and to the balm of consolation administered for the body, it is well known that the last best gift had been added—the gift of a Bible for the wants of the soul. But a few Sundays before the fatal event, when these two royal personages were sitting at table with a single guest, and attended only by one domestic, the Princess expressed the utmost satisfaction in having enjoyed the privilege of a quiet Sabbath, and the opportunity of twice attending Divine Service. She was a constant communicant at the holy sacrament.—If, my brethren, such fruits in the highest station of life may well cause to blush many a nominal Christian of inferior rank—if in any station they may be deemed at least a fair exterior test of an inward faith, and well directed disposition of heart; shall we question, with respect to our lamented Princess herself, the reason or the result of her removal? Or, can we forbear to hope that her glorified spirit is now raised to the enjoyment of an heavenly crown, for which, with her babe, she has exchanged the reversion of an earthly one; and that from a higher than any temporal elevation she is at this moment looking down, and, in pity for our vain regrets, bidding us to ‘forget those things which are behind, to reach forth unto those things which are before, and to press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus?’” Hoare, pp. 15—17.

“It may probably be expected, on the present occasion, that I should say something concerning the illustrious person, whose sudden and unexpected removal we are assembled to deplore. I must confess I am no friend to the flatteries which are

sometimes used on occasions like the present; nor am I an enemy to the commendations which are justly due to departed worth. Did it accord with my design, I could, with much truth and satisfaction, dwell on the many promising and estimable qualities which distinguished and adorned her exalted rank and station. I could expatiate on her attention to the duties of religion, particularly her regular observance of the Sabbath-day. I could extol her unaffected humility, and benevolent attention to the wants of the poor; her affability, condescension, and courtesy, to her inferiors; and that freedom from ostentation and vanity, which she possessed in a very remarkable degree. I could dwell with delight on the domestic virtues for which she was so eminently distinguished. I could remind you of her patience and composure in suffering; and her pious resignation to the will of God, under circumstances the most painful and trying to our nature. These graces were conspicuous features in her character, and proved the practical tendency of the principles which she professed, and the influence which they had upon her heart.” Crowther, pp. 11, 12.

Yet illustrious as were her rank and virtues, they could not prevent or postpone the awful hour of dissolution; a circumstance of which most of our authors have availed themselves, in order to point out the vanity of sublunary things, and the forcible nature of the appeal thus made by the Almighty to the hearts and consciences of men.

“The first particular which strikes the attention in this solemn visitation, is the rank of the illustrious personage, who appears to have been placed on the pinnacle of society, for the express purpose of rendering her fall the more conspicuous, and of convincing as many as are susceptible of conviction that ‘man at his best estate is altogether vanity.’ The Deity himself adorned the victim with his own hands, accumulating upon her all the decorations and ornaments best adapted to render her the object of universal admiration. He permitted her to touch whatever this sublunary scene presents that is most attractive and alluring, but to grasp nothing; and after conducting her to an eminence whence

she could survey all the glories of empire as her destined possession, closed her eyes in death." Hall, pp. 12, 13.

"There is no sorrow which imagination can picture, no sign of anguish which nature agonized and oppressed can exhibit, no accent of wo, but what is already familiar to the ear of fallen afflicted humanity; and the roll which Ezekiel beheld, flying through the heavens, inscribed within and without, 'with sorrow, lamentation, and wo,' enters, sooner or later, into every house, and discharges its contents in every bosom. But in the private departments of life, the distressing incidents which occur are confined to a narrow circle. The hope of an individual is crushed; the happiness of a family is destroyed; but the social system is unimpaired, and its movements experience no impediment, and sustain no sensible injury. The arrow passes through the air, which soon closes upon it, and all is tranquil. But when the great lights and ornaments of the world, placed aloft to conduct its inferior movements, are extinguished, such an event resembles the apocalyptic vial poured into that element which changes its whole temperature, and is the presage of fearful commotions, of thunders, lightnings, and tempests." Ibid. pp. 13, 14.

Having thus viewed the character of the Princess upon earth, we cannot but cite the beautiful description given of her *present* state by Mr. Hall, on the supposition of her being, what ordinary report has described her as being, a true Christian, and consequently an heir to a blissful immortality.

"Is it now any subject of regret, think you, to this amiable Princess so suddenly removed, 'that her sun went down while it was yet day;' or that, prematurely snatched from prospects the most brilliant and enchanting, she was compelled to close her eyes so soon on a world, of whose grandeur she formed so conspicuous a part? No: other objects occupy her mind, other thoughts engage her attention, and will continue to engage it for ever. All things with her are changed; and, viewed from that pure and ineffable light, for which, we humbly hope, religion prepared her, the lustre of a diadem is scarcely visible, majesty emits a feeble and sickly ray, and all

ranks and conditions of men appear but so many troops of pilgrims in different garbs, toiling through the same vale of tears, distinguished only by different degrees of wretchedness." Hall, p. 30.

We proceed now to notice a few of the practical remarks suggested by several of our authors, in the way of improvement, from the solemn event. The first and most obvious inference is the frailty of man.

"When Jehovah was pleased to command Isaiah the prophet to make a public proclamation in the ears of the people, what was it, think you, he was ordered to announce? Was it some profound secret of nature which had baffled the inquiries of philosophers, or some great political convulsion which was to change the destiny of empires? No: these are not the sort of communications most suited to the grandeur of his nature, or the exigencies of ours. 'The voice said, Cry; and he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever.' Instead of presenting to our eyes the mutations of power, and the revolutions of states and kingdoms, he exhibits a more awful and affecting spectacle—the human race itself withering under the breath of his mouth, perishing under his rebuke; while he plants his eternal word, which subsists from generation to generation, in undecaying vigour, to console our wretchedness, and impregnate the dying mass with the seed of immortality. As the frailty of man, and the perpetuity of God's promises, are the greatest contrast the universe presents, so the practical impression of this truth, however obvious, is the beginning of wisdom, nor is there a degree of moral elevation to which it will not infallibly conduct us." Hall, pp. 28, 29.

The duty of consideration, and attention to the providence of God, is another topic which could not fail to be urged from so striking and affecting an event. Mr. Clayton accordingly remarks:

"There is much more of disguised in-

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fidelity in the hearts of men, and of constructive atheism in their lives, than a merely cursory observation of human society would lead one to suspect. Not a few are to be found, in a Christian land, and under the decent garb of a religious profession, who, though they would be offended, perhaps to exasperation, by a charge of atheism or infidelity formally preferred against them, yet accustom themselves so to reason, to speak, and to act, as justly to expose themselves to the disgraceful imputation.

"I do not intend to assert that they are all this in speculation, or by their own avowal; but they are so practically, and with relation to the daily occurrences of life. For they do not habitually and devoutly acknowledge a first cause, nor cherish an abiding sense of the providential agency of God, in the affairs of this lower world. 'God is not in all their thoughts;' or, to adopt the still stronger language of St. Paul, 'they live without God (*absois*) in the world.' Events are too generally considered out of their connexion with the Supreme Disposer of them, and with a visible disregard of the meaning and moral which they are fitted to convey, for the instruction, the warning, or the consolation of mankind. Now, if the bearing or point of any dispensation of Providence be disputed or overlooked; if it be explained away and dissipated in a promiscuous and indiscriminating generality, it is precisely the same, for all moral ends, as though it had never been offered to our notice.

"It often happens, that when God's hand is lifted up in some severe infliction of his displeasure, men will not see it. They view it as in the common course of events; or if constrained to confess that it is extraordinary, they call it 'an unfortunate occurrence, a sad misadventure, a melancholy mischance;' yet, still confining their attention to second causes, they do not rise to God, and acknowledge the interference of him 'who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.'

"This occurs, more especially, to three classes of persons: To men of a studious and philosophical turn of mind, who are accustomed to resolve all things into their natural causes, and to account for every thing upon scientific principles. These are slow to ascend to a higher province than that of rational investigation, and are Christ. Observ. No. 193.

lamentably blind to the operations of the Deity. Men of much secular occupation also, are in danger of neglecting the intimations of God's providence. They are so much tossed on the sea of worldly cares, and carried away by the strong tide of earthly affections, that they have little time, and, perhaps, less inclination, to pause, to reflect, and to form moral deductions from the events which are taking place around them. For these, they have no eye, any farther than as they interfere with their calculations, and affect their temporal interests. The third class comprehends the votaries of pleasure. Their life is of too sensitive and voluptuous a character, to admit of sober consideration and a deliberate reference of all events to God. Lest in a round of enervating dissipation, their minds are not in unison with the design, nor capable of deciphering the import of providential dispensations. God passes by them, in some of the grandest passages of his administration, totally unobserved; the sublime character of events is entirely destroyed; their instructive tendency is defeated; and nothing remains of them but the awful responsibility which must necessarily attach to every man, before whose eyes the moral Ruler has moved, in all the stately, magnificent, and edifying forms of his providential government. How important is it, then, to our consistency, to our improvement, to our final happiness, that we should be numbered among the heedful, the pious, the practical observers of the Divine operations." Clayton, pp. 24—27.

In attending to the duty which Mr. Clayton points out, it is obvious that much soberness of judgment is requisite. We are not to attempt too minutely and curiously to develop the *design* of the Almighty in his inflictions; or to render a season of national mourning a time for the display of political animosities; or to speculate too confidently on future results which depend not upon us but upon God.

"Neither let us be tempted too deeply to speculate upon the secret intentions of our Heavenly Father in such a visitation; or too solicitously to ask, whether it be an infliction in mercy or in wrath. Let us remember, that the Almighty Creator is not, like his own frail creatures, sometimes un-

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der the influence of one passion, sometimes of another. In the divine nature no one attribute can be regarded as distinct from the rest, or as acting individually and alone. As is His power, such also is His mercy. And in that pure and perfect essence we are to consider wisdom as so closely conjoined with authority, justice and judgment so sweetly tempered with goodness and compassion, that every act of the Divine Sovereignty may equally demand the confidence of mankind; and in our private as well as public capacity, we may say with the same assurance under every possible event, like holy Job, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord.' Hoare, pp. 7, 8.

"While, however, we behold the sovereignty of the Godhead, and perceive the weakness of our common nature, we should at the same time neither murmur nor despair. Every thing is ordained or permitted by God for our ultimate happiness or improvement. Little as we see into the plans of Providence, and unable as we are to penetrate far into the veil of human events, yet do we see enough to convince us, that God never willingly, or but for their own good, punisheth the sons of men. Though the fate and issue of things be wisely hid in the womb of time, yet have we the sure word of Scripture and experience for believing, that the lot will at length fall into the lap of the righteous. We grieve not, then, as they without hope. Though troubled we are not forsaken, though cast down we are not destroyed." Bishop of Chester, p. 13.

"Amidst a variety of most pleasing indications, that a far more religious spirit prevails in this our favoured land, than was observable some years ago, one circumstance has long grieved me, nay, occasioned a considerable degree of alarm in my mind, as to the event of our public dangers and trials: I mean the general and almost universal disposition prevailing among men of the most discordant sentiments, political and religious, without excepting some zealous professors and preachers of evangelical truth, to trace back every painful event connected with our many late trials and deliverances, to the criminal misconduct of some description or other of their fellow-mortals, without 'seeing the name of the Lord,' or hearing 'the voice of the rod,' and recollecting 'who hath appointed it.'—One description of men can find the cau-

ses, almost exclusively, of all our distresses, during the dreadful war, in which we were so long engaged, and since its conclusion, in the misconduct of our rulers: as if, after a tremendous storm, in which both winds and waves were wholly out of the control of the pilot, master, or seamen; some real or imaginary mistake, in their management of the vessel, were sufficient to account for the storm itself; without thinking of, at least without mentioning, 'the Lord, who sent out the great wind, and caused the mighty tempest, in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.' It appears to me at least, that governors, 'wise as an angel of God,' could not have prevented those convulsions which almost wrecked Europe, and menaced our ruin; any more than the mariners could prevent the tempest, which the Lord sent forth after Jonah. And let it be remarked, even allowing for argument's sake at least, that errors and faults might be found in our public measures, yea, considerable ones (for I presume not to be a judge in these matters)—yet is it not far more easy, after the storm is subsided, to sit in security, and criticise and severely condemn the conduct of those concerned in navigating the vessel, than it would have been, to stand at the helm, and avoided those errors, during the raging of the overwhelming tempest?

"On the other hand, a large proportion of Britons satisfy themselves with finding, in the conduct and character of France, and in the enormous ambition, cruelty, and iniquity of her Usurper and his agents, the cause, the adequate cause, of all our expenditure of blood and treasure: not only thus exculpating our rulers and others in this land, but entirely overlooking the rod and voice of God in these events; and disregarding, if not denying, him 'who appointed it:' as if Job had satisfied himself, in the day of his calamity, in exclaiming against the Sabeans, Chaldeans, and others; instead of saying, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'

"Even when unfavourable seasons and concurrent causes, wholly beyond the control of human wisdom and power, had added a great scarcity of provisions to the many other distresses and difficulties under which we laboured: not only the thoughtless multitude and factious demagogues, but men of far superior respectability in other things, seemed scarcely at all to no-



tice 'the Lord's voice which cried to the land,' or to 'hear the rod, and who had appointed it,' while they combined in loading with reproach and odium different classes of their fellow-citizens. Yet surely nothing can be more evidently scriptural, than that famine and scarcity, as well as war and pestilence, are the judgments of God, with which he visits guilty nations. Thus, it appears, that disregard to the voice and rod of God, and forgetfulness of him who appointed it, have rendered one stroke after another of his correcting displeasure needful for us; if he do not give us up as incorrigible, to endure still more awful desolations." Scott, pp. 7—9.

"In lamenting the awful dispensation with which this country has recently been visited, the Christian patriot will remember that he must weep in a frame of humble resignation to the mysterious will of providence. In our limited view, this event is indeed most deplorable; for, doubtless, according to the maxims of human policy, every interruption of the direct line of succession is a national calamity: but there are counsels deeper than those of men; and if ever we have been taught the utter emptiness of worldly expectation, the lesson has been given in the sad cause of our present sorrow. The calculations of human wisdom sink into folly before the inscrutable purposes of the Most High. This observation is not directed against the exercise of prudent foresight; but is intended to check presumptuous and too anxious speculation into futurity. We should look rather to our actual state and present conduct, than to remote possibilities; humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God, by repentance for those sins which have provoked His anger, and by reformation in every class of society. Instead of suffering our minds to be disturbed by political alarms, excited by an over-curious anticipation of remote contingencies relative to our hereditary succession, let us repose our sorrows in submissive reliance upon Him 'by whom kings reign.' Let, indeed, the tribute of our tears be paid to that virtuous Princess, by whose early death our fondest hopes have been frustrated!—let us heave the patriotic sigh over the tomb which envelops the remains of illustrious rank, of youth, of loveliness!—but let us weep in the same humble spirit of resignation 'as

though we wept not;' leaving the succession of our rulers with Him upon whose 'shoulders' is 'the government' of empires as well as of His Church,—who 'ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will,'—who is 'King of kings, and Lord of lords!' " Gorham, pp. 12, 13.

"You will perceive, my brethren, that I have confined my attention in this discourse to such reflections as we would wish every individual to indulge, in the contemplation of this great national calamity, without advertent to its aspect, on the political prospects and interests of the country. The discussion of the subject in that view of it, is equally unsuited to my province, and to my talents. I leave it to politicians to investigate the effects it is likely to produce on the prosperity of the British empire; esteeming myself sufficiently happy, if I may be the humble instrument of fixing your attention on subjects best fitted to prepare you for 'a kingdom which cannot be moved;' being convinced, as you may infer from my constant practice, that this is neither the place nor the season for political discussion, and that the teachers of religion are called to a nobler occupation, than to subserve the interests of party, or fan the flames of public dissension. In perfect consistence with this observation, permit me to remark that it appears to me highly presumptuous to attempt to scan the secret purpose of the Deity, in this dispensation, by assigning it to *specific* moral causes. 'His ways are in the great deep; his paths past finding out.' That it ought to be considered as a signal rebuke and chastisement, designed to bring our sins to remembrance, there is no doubt; but to attempt to specify the particular crimes and delinquencies which have drawn down this visitation, is inconsistent with the modesty which ought to accompany all inquiries into the mysteries of Providence, and especially repugnant to the spirit which this most solemn and affecting event should inspire. At a time when every creature ought to tremble under the judgments of God, it ill becomes us to indulge in reciprocal recrimination; and when 'the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint,' it is not for the members to usurp the seat of judgment, by hurling mutual accusations and reproaches against each other. Are there not sufficient provocations to be found in all

ranks and classes, from the lowest to the highest, to justify and account for these and still greater severities; or is it necessary to look farther for a vindication of the equity of the Divine proceeding, than in the open impiety and profaneness, the perjury and injustice, the profanation of the Sabbath, and contempt of sacred things, the profligacy of the lower, and the irreligion and impurity of the higher orders, which, notwithstanding the multitude of splendid exceptions, still form the national character?" Hall, pp. 55—57.

"We should learn from this subject to soften our resentments. Dr. Johnson has remarked, in some part of his writings, 'that our lives are made up of injuries and reparations.' It is indeed scarcely possible to live, without either giving offence or being offended. Affronts are frequently imagined where they were never intended, and injury is sometimes incidentally inflicted, without design or premeditation. Hence it comes to pass that scope is given for the exercise of those great principles of Christian forbearance and charitable forgiveness, without which the peace of society can never be preserved. Life is too short, and death too certain, to admit of cherished animosities. Who could desire to go down to the grave with feelings of resentment towards any whom he is to meet speedily at the tribunal of God? It has on some occasions been seen, and to the eye of the Christian observer it is a gratifying spectacle, that an event of mortality draws together divided minds; hushes the din of controversy, produces an oblivion of party feeling, and amalgamates in one general sentiment of grief, men of opposite principles and hostile dispositions. We seem, at this moment of national sorrow, to have been touched at the very heart, and have been led by common consent to gather round the grave of the illustrious dead, there to pour forth our tears, and there to bury our resentments. Britain has offered to surrounding countries, a sight rarely beheld;—a great nation dissolved in the sorrows of an unfeigned condolence, voluntarily paying a tribute of loyalty and affection to their departed Princess, and bound to each other, by the ties, not of political concord and of civil interest so much as by the bonds of a generous and all-pervading sympathy."—Clayton, pp. 15, 16.

"The judgment under which we now labour, supplies, I think, one touching, and, to every good and Christian mind, one powerful argument of loyalty. It is the distance of the prince from his people which feeds the political jealousy of the latter, and which, by removing the former to a height of inaccessible grandeur, places him as it were beyond the reach of their sympathies. Much of that political rancour which festers, and agitates, and makes such a tremendous appearance of noise and of hostility in our land, is due to the aggravating power of distance. If two of the deadliest political antagonists in our country, who abuse, and vilify, and pour forth their stormy eloquence on each other, whether in parliament or from the press, were actually to come into such personal and familiar contact as would infuse into their controversy the sweetening of mere acquaintanceship, this very circumstance would disarm and do away almost all their violence. The truth is, that when one man rails against another across the table of a legislative assembly, or when he works up his fermenting imagination, and pens his virulent sentences against another, in the retirements of a closet, he is fighting against a man at a distance—he is exhausting his strength against an enemy whom he does not know—he is swelling into indignation, and into all the movements of what he thinks right and generous principle, against a chimera of his own apprehension; and a similar reaction comes back upon him from the quarter that he has assailed, and thus the controversy thickens, and the delusion every day gets more impenetrable, and the distance is ever widening, and the breach is always becoming more hopeless and more irreparable; and all this between two men, who, if they had been in such accidental circumstances of juxtaposition as could have let them a little more into one another's feelings, and to one another's sympathies, would at least have had all the asperities of their difference smoothed away by the mere softenings and kindlinesses of ordinary human intercourse.

"Now, let me apply this remark to the mutual state of sentiment which obtains between the different orders of the community. Amongst the rich, there is apt at times to rankle an injurious and unworthy impression of the poor—and just because



these poor stand at a distance from them—just because they come not into contact with that which would draw them out in courteousness to their persons, and in benevolent attentions to their families.—Amongst the poor, on the other hand, there is often a disdainful suspicion of the wealthy, as if they were actuated by a proud indifference to them and to their concerns, and as if they were placed away from them at so distant and lofty an elevation as not to require the exercise of any of those cordialities which are ever sure to spring in the bosom of man to man, when they come to know each other, and to have the actual sight of each other. But, let any accident place an individual of the higher before the eyes of the lower order, on the ground of their common humanity—let the latter be made to see that the former are akin to themselves in all the sufferings, and in all the sensibilities of our common inheritance—let, for example, the greatest chieftain of the territory die, and the report of his weeping children, or of his distracted widow, be sent through the neighbourhood—or, let an infant of his family be suffering, and the mothers of the humble vicinity be run to for counsel and assistance—or, in any other way, let the rich, instead of being viewed by their inferiors through the dim and distant medium of that fancied interval which separates the ranks of society, be seen as heirs of the same frailty, and as dependent on the same sympathies with themselves—and, at that moment, all the floodgates of honest sympathy will be opened, and the lowest servants of the establishment will join in the cry of distress which has come upon their family; and the neighbouring cottagers, to share in their grief, have only to recognise them as the partakers of one nature, and to perceive an assimilation of feelings and of circumstances between them.” Chalmers, pp. 13—15.

Such are some of the more peculiar lessons and reflections which our various authors bring forward as resulting from the event under consideration. Lessons also of a more general kind, are wisely and forcibly suggested. Mr. Cunningham particularly mentions *five*, and these some of the most important which man can learn; “the instability of all earthly things—the emptiness and worth-

lessness of all human distinctions—the inaccuracy of all human calculations—the vanity of all human hopes—the transcendent value of real religion.” We wish we had room for more than the following specimen.

“Most men talk wisely on the instability of the world. We are not weak enough to deny that which the history of every day compels us to admit. But our lives too often contradict our sentiments. Philosophers in opinion, we are, as to this point, children in conduct; and worship the very relicts of that image of the world which we have previously stamped to dust, and trod under foot. Every event, then, which is calculated to carry home this opinion from the head to the heart, and to give it effect in our daily conduct, is of the highest importance. And it sometimes pleases that Heavenly Father, whose tender love is chiefly bent on the spiritual improvement of his creatures, to depart, as it were, from the more usual course of his providence, and, by some awful visitation, to present the lesson under a form which no heart can easily resist. And such is the solemn event which we are now called to contemplate. If permanence could have been conceived to belong to any human life or circumstances, it might have been imagined to be the lot of her whom we have lost. Here was the freshness of youth, the vigour of uninterrupted health, a frame carefully nursed up by all the resources of skill, and tenderly watched over by all the assiduities of love—a frame borrowing from rank all the advantages which plenty and leisure confer, and uninjured by the indulgences or excesses which abundance is too apt to produce—a frame, moreover, guarded, I may say, by the wishes and the prayers of a mighty people. And, yet, where is this frame now? A single day has taught us the fallacy of our calculations on the durability of any thing here—has extinguished this bright spark of life—has strewed all this strength and honour in the dust!

“Who, then, my brethren, that stands over this wreck of all that is high and powerful, can fail to feel the pillars of his own stability shake under him? Who does not read in every part of this catastrophe, traced, as it were, in the dust, by the dying hand of the illustrious Individual we have lost—‘We must needs die, and be as wa-

ter spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up: neither does God respect any person.'—I earnestly pray that the lesson thus taught may deeply impress itself upon all, and especially upon the minds of the healthy and the young. Have you, my younger brethren, any peculiar and exclusive grant of extended life conveyed to yourselves? Have you any deed of protracted existence, signed and sealed by a Hand too strong for the grasp of death? Have you any title to permanence more durable than hers whose life, in addition to every other security, appeared to be bound up with the interests and welfare of a whole nation? What madness is it, then, to be building upon any thing here! 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world'—for these perish in the using—but rest upon Him who is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'" Cunningham, pp. 4—5.

"It is astonishing to what a degree men are tempted to become the architects of their own plans of life, instead of consulting the models which are laid up for them in Scripture. Pride is always seducing us into a belief that we can choose and act better for ourselves and for others than our Heavenly Father would choose for us. We fancy to ourselves a situation, or a connexion, or a state of health and circumstances, which would better promote our temporal and spiritual welfare than that which the over-ruling hand of Providence has assigned us. We forget, that He who 'seeth in secret' is, as it were, acting behind the opaque veil which conceals the future from us. Now this state of mind is always intimately connected with presumptuous conceptions of the accuracy of our own calculations.—In idea we look along the line, and count all the interruptions which are springing up in our course. But, my brethren, let our calculations be of the most profound nature, let them proceed upon the most unquestionable facts and principles, how soon does a single unforeseen circumstance confound them all! Perhaps no event ever laid the ground-work of a larger body of speculations than the birth or the marriage of this illustrious Individual. Legislators and philosophers, and moralists, all constructed their plans with a reference to this event.—The whole scheme, I may say, of national politics, took its bearings, in part, from this circumstance. Nor can men be blamed for employing the most certain premises which

they possess, in order to arrive at their conclusions. But the lesson which is taught by this melancholy event, is the uncertainty of *all* premises and all conclusions founded upon the condition of man, or drawn from the shallow resources of human calculation. While we are regarding a distant spot, something is interposed between us and it, which removes it from our view.—While we are calculating the result of a particular event, the event itself becomes impossible. While we are triumphantly deciding what such an individual shall do at such a time, the individual goes to give in his account before God. While I am weaving laurels for my child, an Unseen Hand is preparing the weed which is to shoot upon his grave. While I am busily collecting the stones for the edifice of his comforts or honours, God designs to employ them as a covering for his bones." Cunningham, pp. 10—13.

In a similar strain, Mr. Crowther and the Bishop of Chester remark:—

"The vanity of all earthly greatness, the uncertainty and the transitoriness of every terrestrial enjoyment, can in no other instance be so convincingly brought home to our mind and feelings. Who now can trust in any thing of this world? Who now can build his hopes upon the morrow? Who but must perceive, that youth, and health, and riches, are not, for an instant, to be depended upon? That the paths of grandeur lead but to the grave? For what event could be farther from all expectation, than that which has placed in the silent tomb the Parent and her Child? If human efforts, if human prayers, could have averted the dart of death, we had not now been lamenting together over the common failure of our fondest wishes. The first lesson, therefore, which this appalling dispensation should suggest, is, a full conviction of our own helplessness, and a sense of our dependence upon God. We here behold the precariousness of the tenure of life, and the fleetingness of our abode upon earth." Bishop of Chester, pp. 11, 12.

"As a further way of improving this solemn dispensation, let us keep in mind the very precarious tenure by which we hold all our possessions. The exalted Personage who is thus suddenly gone, seemed likely to survive many even of the most youthful among us. But a few days ago, she was in the midst of those enjoyments



which render life most desirable;—in the vigour of youth, in the full relish and possession of the most rational delights; honoured with titles; blessed with affluence; beloved and esteemed by all; fondly expecting the happiness which she should soon enjoy as a parent, and as the mother of a future sovereign of this highly favoured and happy kingdom. Yet an hour, a few moments, were sufficient to extinguish in her all sense of these joys, and for ever remove her from every thing which the world holds most dear.—We see, by this affecting instance of mortality, that no human advantages can resist the stroke of death; that all earthly glory, like the flower of the field, must wither and decay; that they, who are most exalted in rank, must obey the summons, no less than the most obscure and indigent. Thus it is with the lives of men, as with the course of rivers: some traverse a greater extent, and pass through more pleasant scenes than others; but all equally tend to the same abyss, and are blended at last in one common receptacle. How should this consideration cool the ardour of dissipation, humble the insolence of pride, moderate the flame of ambition, and quench the insatiable thirst of avarice! in a word, wean our hearts from the things that are seen and temporal, and fix them on those that are unseen and eternal! For to what does all, even the best of this world, amount? Stretch your imagination to the utmost—conceive a person in the full possession of rank, and power, and riches, and honour. And when you have finished the gaudy picture, what does the value of it amount to? The scene is vanity, and ends in vexation of spirit.—O! that I could so shew you the emptiness of these things, and the great importance of things eternal, as to send you away heartily resolved to seek a better and more enduring substance than this world can afford! I should then gain one of the noblest ends of my office; and we should have reason to acknowledge our meeting together this day to have been for the better, and not for the worse.”—Crowther, pp. 14, 15.

The moral utility of such sombre reflections is pointed out as follows, by the Bishop of Chester:—

“Sorrow is the nurse of wisdom. Every pious meditation, and every good disposition, are cherished and matured in the

house of mourning. It is there we are taught to feel, that we are men and brethren. It is there we learn to commune with ourselves, and to retire within: it is there that we throw off the debasing clogs of mortality, and more sensibly aspire unto those blessed regions, where peace and happiness for ever dwell.

“The contemplation of death, also, cannot but impress us with a conviction of the uncertain and perishable nature of all things here below—cannot but remind us of that land of darkness to which we are all so evidently tending. Pass but a few years more, and this assembled crowd will be—every one of them—consigned to the grave, out of sight, and out of remembrance. The sun indeed will rise and set, but not to us. The tides will ebb and flow, the laws of Nature will have their course, the earth will still give her increase, and the business of the world go on; but we shall be removed from this scene—shall have no share in what is passing.

“Such meditations naturally tend to fill the mind with a sense of our entire dependence upon God. There is nothing in reality so near and essential to us, and yet there is nothing for the most part so distant from our perceptions, as the Deity. He is about our path, and about our bed—in every breath we breathe, in every thought we think; and yet, for this very reason, and because he ought to be every thing, he too often becomes nothing to us—unseen, or disregarded. But in the season of adversity, when all other helps have failed, we then perceive the necessity of fleeing unto God. His providential care becomes first the object of faith, than of hope, and lastly of consolation.

“These should be the feelings of every pious mind under all the trials and vicissitudes of life. He who makes affliction or death productive of their proper effects, will see in the arm of God a Power overruling all things, and which can preserve him amidst all adversities. He becomes satisfied that the views of the Deity never ultimately terminate in misery; but that good is constantly educed out of evil.

“Now, if ever there were any calamity, in any period of time, which called forth these reflections, and which constrained every rational being to think and feel, it is

surely that event which your minds, I dare say, have already anticipated—an event, which has thrown a cloud over the happiness of nations, and which has filled this land with sadness. It is indeed a calamity both of a public and a private nature. In a public point of view, it has disappointed the hopes on which loyalty was reposing.—As a private sorrow, it has gone home to the bosom of every family, and of almost every individual in the empire. Afflicting as may be the review of our loss, yet let us not shrink from a duty. It may be of use to us, to be thus afflicted. We may hence become better and wiser men.” Bishop of Chester, pp. 6—8.

Mr. Scott thus applies the subject for the purpose of self-examination:—

“ ‘The voice of the Lord’ calls each of us, the preacher as well as every one of the congregation, to self-examination, repentance, and works meet for repentance; connected with humble reliance on the mercy and grace of God in Christ Jesus, and earnest prayers for the same. Whatever else we do, or attend on, we shall not observe this mournful day in a proper manner, if we do not examine our own hearts and lives, humbly confessing our sins, as a part of that national guilt, which causes the righteous Judge to lift up his hand against us. ‘The voice of the Lord’ cries aloud to all, saying, ‘Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.’ Instead of complaining or desponding, let us then ‘search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord; let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens.’ Let us thankfully accept of his salvation, and yield ourselves to his service; that, being ‘renewed in the spirit of our mind,’ we may serve God ‘in newness of life.’” Scott, pp. 19, 20.

Having thus woven together a few of the most impressive or useful passages from the various sermons before us, we shall devote our concluding remarks to two or three of these discourses, which, on different accounts, call for a more particular notice.

The first of these is the Bishop of

Chester’s; in which we are sorry to observe several passages which we find it impossible to reconcile with sound doctrine. The most extraordinary, however, is the following.

“Before we depart from this sacred place, and return to the little, but engrossing, occupations of life, we should be wanting to the common sentiment of a religious and a loyal people—we should not do justice to your feelings, or to our own—if we did not now, as with one heart and voice, pour forth a devout and united prayer to our Heavenly Father—the Lord both of the living and the dead:—Sanctify then, O merciful God, we beseech thee! the sorrows which we this day feel. We submit ourselves with resignation, but with confidence, to thy all-wise dispensations. We commend too, as far as we may, and as it becometh us, into thy hands the soul of her who is departed. We pray, we humbly pray, that she be received into the mansions of the blessed;—that she exchange a corruptible crown for one that is incorruptible, and that fade not away.” Bishop of Chester, pp. 18, 19.

We shall not do more than express our poignant grief and extreme surprise at perusing such a paragraph from such a quarter. Is his lordship aware, that his prayer for the dead, even with all its qualification, is at once unscriptural and anti-Protestant? Is he further aware of the danger of his example being pleaded by the Roman Catholics to support that very doctrinal error, which gave rise to those gross practical enormities at which the Reformers first revolted? If it be lawful to pray for the dead, under any circumstances, or with whatever qualifications, a wide inlet is opened for the doctrine of Purgatory, with its accompaniments of expiatory prayers, masses, and indulgences. If there be any one doctrine of Popery more evidently invented than another, for the purposes of “filthy lucre,” it is this. Luther, three hundred years ago, and long before his eyes were sufficiently opened to the other enormities of



Popery, detected this obvious error, and perceived that it was but a pretext (and that a very flimsy one) for serving the purposes of ecclesiastical avarice. And yet, at the present enlightened period of society, the Bishop of Chester has lent his name to countenance the very hypothesis on which the grossest superstitions of Popery were built; and this, too, in a diocese abounding with persons of that persuasion, and many of whom are employed, in every possible way, in spreading their opinions!

From the Bishop of Chester's sermon we turn to Dr. Chalmers's, which he has published in consequence of some remarks made upon a passage in it in several of the daily journals. The text is from Isaiah xxvi. 9: *For when thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*:—and in discussing it, the author laments that he should not be able, in the space of a single discourse, to clear his way to those topics which are most specifically appropriated to a sermon, and must therefore be obliged to restrict himself to that more partial application of the text which relates to "the matters of public Christianity." We proceed to give one or two extracts.

"I cannot open my Bible, without learning that loyalty is one branch of the righteousness of practical Christianity. I am not seeking to please men but God, when I repeat his words in your hearing—that you should honour the king—that you should obey magistrates—that you should meddle not with those who are given to change—that you should be subject to principalities and powers—that you should lead a quiet and a peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. This, then, is a part of the righteousness which it is our business to teach; and sure I am that it is a part of righteousness which the judgment now dealt out to us should, of all others, dispose you to learn. I know not a virtue more in harmony with the present feelings, and afflictions, and circumstances of the country, than that of a steadfast and determined loyalty. The time has been when such an event as the one that we are now assembled to deplore, would have put every restless spirit into motion, and set a guilty ambition upon its Christ. *Observ. No. 193.*

murderous devices, and brought powerful pretenders with their opposing hosts of vassalage into the field, and enlisted towns and families under the rival banners of a most destructive fray of contention, and thus have broken up the whole peace and confidence of society. Let us bless God that these days of barbarism are now gone by. But the vessel of the state is still exposed to many agitations. The sea of politics is a sea of storms, on which the gale of human passions would make her founder, were it not for the guidance of human principle; and, therefore, the truest policy of a nation is to Christianize her subjects, and to disseminate among them the influence of religion. The most skilful arrangement for rightly governing a state, is, to scatter among the governed, not the terrors of power—not the threats of jealous and alarmed authority—not the demonstrations of sure and ready vengeance held forth by the rigour of an offended law. These may, at times, be imperiously called for.—But a permanent security against the wild outbreaks of turbulence and disaster, is only to be attained by diffusing the lessons of the Gospel throughout the great mass of our population—even those lessons which are utterly and diametrically at antipodes with all that is criminal and wrong in the spirit of political disaffection. The only radical counteraction to this evil is to be found in the spirit of Christianity; and though animated by such a spirit, a man may put on the intrepidity of one of the old prophets, and denounce even in the ear of royalty, the profligacies which may disgrace or deform it—though animated by such a spirit, he may lift his protesting voice in the face of an unchristian magistracy, and tell them of their errors—though animated by such a spirit, he, to avoid every appearance of evil, will neither stoop to the flattery of power nor to the solicitations of patronage—and though all this may bear, to the superficial eye, a hard, and repulsive, and hostile aspect towards the established dignities of the land—yet forget not, that if a real and honest principle of Christianity lie at the root of this spirit, there exists within the bosom of such a man, a foundation of principle, on which all the lessons of Christianity will rise into visible and consistent exemplification. And it is he, and such as he, who will turn out to be the salvation of the country, when the hour of her threatened danger is approaching—and it is just in proportion as you spread and multiply such a character that you raise within the bosom of the nation the best security against all her fluctuations—and, as in every other department of human concerns, so will it be found, that, in this particular department, Chris-

tians are the salt of the earth, and Christianity the most copious and emanating fountain of all the guardian virtues of peace, and order, and patriotism. Chalmers, pp. 10—12.

The following passage was that which excited the animadversions to which we have alluded : how little it justified them, especially when taken in connexion with the foregoing, in which the duty of loyalty is so earnestly inculcated, our readers will judge for themselves.

“Under my first head, I restricted myself exclusively to the virtue of loyalty, which is one of the special, but I most willingly admit, nay, and most earnestly contend, is also one of the essential attributes of righteousness. But there is a point on which I profess myself to be altogether at issue with a set of men who composed, at one time, whatever they do now, a very numerous class of society. I mean those men, who, with all the ostentation and all the intolerance of loyalty, evinced an utter indifference either to their own personal religion or to the religion of the people who were around them—who were satisfied with the single object of keeping the neighbourhood in a state of political tranquillity—who, if they could only get the population to be quiet, cared not for the extent of profaneness or of profligacy that was amongst them—and who, while they thought to signalize themselves in the favour of their earthly king, by keeping down every turbulent or rebellious movement among his subjects, did, in fact, by their own conspicuous example, lead them and cheer them on in their rebellion against the King of heaven—and, as far as the mischief could be wrought by the contagion of their personal influence, these men of loyalty did what in them lay to spread a practical contempt for Christianity, and for all its ordinances, throughout the land.

“Now, I would have such men to understand, if any such there be within the sphere of my voice, that it is not with their loyalty that I am quarrelling. I am only telling them, that this single attribute of righteousness will never obtain a steady footing in the hearts of the people, except on the ground of a general principle of righteousness. I am telling them how egregiously they are out of their own politics, in ever thinking that they can prop the virtue of loyalty in a nation, while they are busily employed, by the whole instrumentality of their example and of their doings,

in sapping the very foundation upon which it is reared. I am telling them, that if they wish to see loyalty in perfection, and such loyalty, too, as requires not any scowling vigilance of theirs to uphold it, they must look to the most moral, and orderly, and Christianized districts of the country. I am merely teaching them a lesson, of which they seem to be ignorant, that if you loosen the hold of Christianity over the hearts of the population, you pull down from their ascendancy all the virtues of Christianity, of which loyalty is one. Yes, and I will come yet a little closer, and take a look of that loyalty which exists in the shape of an isolated principle in their own bosoms. I should like to gauge the dimensions of this loyalty of theirs, in its state of disjunction from the general principle of Christianity. I wish to know the kind of loyalty which characterizes the pretenders to whom I am alluding—the men who have no value for preaching, but as it stands associated with the pageantry of state—the men who would reckon it the most grievous of all heresies, to be away from church on some yearly day of the king’s appointment, but are seldom within its walls on the weekly day of God’s appointment—the men who, if ministers were away from their post of loyalty, on an occasion like the present, would, without mercy, and without investigation, denounce them as suspicious characters; but who, when we are at the post of piety, dispensing the more solemn ordinances of Christianity, openly lead the way in that crowded and eager emigration, which carries half the rank and opulence of the town from us. What, oh ! what is the length, and the breadth, and the height, and the depth of this vapouring, swaggering, high-sounding loyalty ? It is nothing better than the loyalty of political subalterns, in the low game of partisanship, or of whippers-in to an existing administration : it is not the loyalty which will avail us in the day of danger : it is not to them that we need to look, in the evil hour of a country’s visitation ; but to those right-hearted, sound-thinking Christian men, who, without one interest to serve, or one hope to forward, honour their king because they fear their God.

“Let me assure such a man, if such a man there is within the limits of this assembly—that, keen as his scent may be after political heresies, the deadliest of all such heresies lies at his own door—that there is not to be found, within the city of our habitation, a rottener member of the community than himself—that, withering as he does by his example the principle which lies at the root of all national prosperity, it is he, and such as he, who stand opposed to the best



and the dearest objects of loyalty ;—and, if ever that shall happen, which it is my most delightful confidence that God will avert from us, and from our children's children to the latest posterity—if ever the wild phrensy of revolution shall run through the ranks of Britain's population, these are the men who will be the most deeply responsible for all its atrocities, and for all its horrors." Chalmers, pp. 20—21.

The remainder of Dr. Chalmers's sermon is employed in pointing out the necessity, and urging the building, of new churches. We need not dwell upon a topic which has so often occupied our own pages, and to which all who value the morals, or comfort, or loyalty, or religion of the community, must attach the very highest importance.

There is but one discourse more (Mr. Hall's) which we shall mention, and which is so decidedly superior to any thing else that we have seen on the late melancholy occasion, that we cannot feel justified in dismissing it without one or two further quotations. We wish we had space to abridge the general argument, which is conducted with a force of reasoning and a splendour of eloquence which it would be difficult to parallel, except perhaps in the pages of the same author.

"While we look at this event with the eyes of flesh, and survey it in the aspect it bears towards our national prospects, it appears a most singular and affecting catastrophe. But considered in itself, or more properly in its relation to a certain, though invisible futurity, its consequences are but commensurate to those which result from the removal of the meanest individual.—He whose death is as little regarded as the fall of a leaf in the forest, and he whose departure involves a nation in despair, are in this view of the subject (by far the most important one) upon a level.—Before the presence of the Great I AM, into which they both immediately enter, these distinctions vanish, and the true statement of the fact on either supposition is, that an immortal spirit has finished its earthly career ; has passed the barriers of the invisible world, to appear before its Maker, in order to receive that sentence which will fix its irrevocable doom, ' according to the deeds done in the body.'—On either supposition, an event has taken

place which has no parallel in the revolutions of time, the consequences of which have not room to expand themselves within a narrower sphere, than an endless duration. An event has occurred, the issues of which must ever baffle and elude all finite comprehension, by concealing themselves in the depths of that abyss, of that eternity, which is the dwelling-place of Deity, where there is sufficient space for the destiny of each among the innumerable millions of the human race to develop itself, and, without interference or confusion, to sustain and carry forwards its separate infinity of interest."

"Man is naturally a prospective creature, endowed not only with a capacity of comparing the present with the past, but also of anticipating the future, and dwelling with anxious rumination on scenes which are yet remote. He is capable of carrying his views, of attaching his anxieties, to a period much more distant than that which measures the limits of his present existence ; capable, we distinctly perceive, of plunging into the depths of future duration, of identifying himself with the sentiments and opinions of a distant age, and of enjoying by anticipation, the fame of which he is aware, he shall never be conscious, and the praises he shall never hear. So strongly is he disposed to link his feelings with futurity, that shadows become realities when contemplated as subsisting there ; and the phantom of posthumous celebrity, the faint image of his being, impressed on future generations, is often preferred to the whole of his present existence, with all its warm and vivid realities. The complexion of the day that is passing over him, is determined by the anticipations of the morrow : the present borrows its brightness and its gloom from the future, which, presenting itself to his contemplation as in a mirror, incessantly agitates him with apparitions of terror or delight. In the calculations of interest, the mind is affected in the same manner : it is perpetuity which stamps its value on whatever we possess, so that the lowest epicure would prefer a small accession to his property, to the most exquisite repast ; and none are found so careless of futurity as not to prefer the inheritance he may bequeath, to one of equal value, the title to which expires with his life.

"How is it, then, that we find it so difficult to prevail upon men to fix their attention firmly on another world, that real future existence which reason assures us is probable, which revelation teaches us is certain, which is separated from us by so

narrow a boundary, and into which thousands of our fellow-creatures are passing every moment? How is it that the professed followers of Him especially, who descended from heaven, who came forth from the Father to conduct us thither, are so indisposed to turn their thoughts and contemplations to that unchanging state of being, into which they are so shortly to enter? It is not, we perceive, that to move forward is not congenial with our mental constitution: it is not because we are so enchanted with the present scene, as to be incapable of diverting our attention from it; for we are continually disquieted by a restless desire of something future: it is not because we are seldom warned, or reminded of another state of existence; for every funeral bell, every opening grave, every symptom of decay within, and of change without us, is a separate warning; to say nothing of the present most affecting dispensation which has filled this nation with such consternation and distress.

"Were any other event, of far inferior moment, ascertained by evidence which made but a distant approach to that which attests the certainty of a life to come; had we equal assurance that, after a very limited though uncertain period, we should be called to migrate into a distant land, whence we were never to return, the intelligence would fill every breast with solicitude; it would become the theme of every tongue; and we should avail ourselves with the utmost eagerness of all the means of information respecting the prospects which awaited us in that unknown country. Much of our attention would be occupied in preparing for our departure; we should cease to consider the place we now inhabit as our home; and nothing would be considered as of moment, but as it bore upon our future destination. How strange is it, then, that with the certainty we all possess of shortly entering into another world, we avert our eyes as much as possible from the prospect; that we seldom permit it to penetrate us; and that the moment the recollection recurs, we hasten to dismiss it, as an unwelcome intrusion? Is it not surprising that the volume we profess to recognise as the record of immortality, and the sole depository of whatever information it is possible to obtain respecting the portion which awaits us, should be consigned to neglect, and rarely, if ever, consulted with the serious intention of ascertaining our future condition?

"That a creature formed for an endless duration should be disposed to turn his at-

tention from that object, and to contract his views and prospects within a circle which, compared to eternity, is but a mathematical point, is truly astonishing; and as it is impossible to account for it from the natural constitution of the mind, it must originate in some great moral cause. It shews that some strange catastrophe has befallen the species; that some deep and radical malady is inherent in the moral system. Though philosophers of a certain description may attempt to explain and justify it on some ingenious hypothesis, yet in spite of metaphysical subtleties, the alarming inquiry will still return—How is it that the disposition of mankind is so much at variance with their prospects; that no train of reflections is more unwelcome than that which is connected with their eternal home? If the change is considered as a happy one; if the final abode to which we are hastening, is supposed to be an improvement on the present, why shrink back from it with aversion? If it is contemplated as a state of suffering, it is natural to inquire what it is, that has invested it with so dark and sombre a character. What is it which has enveloped that species of future in a gloom which pervades no other? If the indisposition to realize a life to come, arises in any measure from a vague presentiment that it will bring us, so to speak, into a closer contact with the Deity, by presenting clearer manifestations of his character and perfections, (and who can doubt that this is a principal cause,) the proof it affords of a great deterioration in our moral condition is complete. For who will suppose it possible, a disposition to hide himself from his Creator should be an original part of the constitution of a reasonable creature? or what more portentous and unnatural than for him that is formed, to shun the presence of his Maker, and to place his felicity in the forgetfulness of him 'in whom he lives, and moves, and has his being?' If he is pained and disquieted whenever he is forcibly reminded of Him whose power sustains, and whose bounty replenishes, the universe with whatever is good and fair; if the Source of being and of happiness is the object of terror, instead of confidence and love, it is not easy to conceive what can afford a stronger conviction of guilt, or a more certain presage of danger.

"The conclusion to which we are conducted, is confirmed by inspiration, which assures us that a great revolution has actually befallen the species, and that, in consequence of the entrance of sin into the world, we have incurred the forfeiture of

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the Divine favour, and the loss of the Divine image. In this situation, it is not difficult to perceive, that the economy adapted to our relief must include two things—the means of expiating guilt, and the means of moral renovation: in other words, an atoning Sacrifice, and a sanctifying Spirit. Both these objects are accomplished in the advent of the Saviour, who, by presenting himself as a sin-offering, has made ample satisfaction to offended justice, and purchased by his merits the renovating Spirit, which is freely offered to as many as sincerely seek it. By the former, the obstructions to our happiness arising from the Divine nature are removed; by the latter, the disqualification springing from our own.”—Hall, pp. 32—40.

With this lengthened extract we dismiss a subject unequalled, perhaps in interest by any thing similar in our own annals, or those of any other nation. We can only wish, what we fear we cannot predict, that the subjects of practical improvement suggested by these as well as by various other writers may be found to have produced the results which their authors intended, and which the mournful event is so well calculated to effect.

## LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, *&c. &c.*

### GREAT BRITAIN.

PREPARING for publication:—Travels in Syria, by J. L. Burckhardt;—Picturesque Tour in Italy, by J. H. Arch;—Letters and Memoirs of the Abbe Edgeworth;—Memoirs and Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton;—Voyage to Gorea, by Lieut. Clifford;—in one vol. 4to., a Narrative of a Tour in South Africa, together with some Account of the State of the Missions of the United Brethren in that interesting Country; by the Rev. C. I. Latrobe.

In the press:—A History of the Civil Wars in England, by G. Arnault;—The Fourth Canto of Childe Harold;—Lessons on Mineralogy, by Mr. Mawe;—Observations made during a Tour through the Pyrennees, France, Switzerland, &c. by J. Milford, Jun.; Travels from Vienna, through Hungary; by Richard Bright, M. D.;—Poems, by Mr. Montgomery;—Travels through Germany, Poland, &c.; by A. Neale, M. D.;—The Case of the Salt Duties, by Sir Thomas Bernard;—The Child's Manual, by Mrs. Sherwood;—Lectures on the Church Catechism, by Mrs. Sherwood;—Voyage to Locuta, with Etchings, by the Author of “Maxims of Neatness and Good Order.”—Considerations on the Impolicy and pernicious Effects of the present Administration of the Poor Laws; with Sug-

gestions for Improving the Condition of the Poor; by Charles Jerram, A. M.;—and Sermons in 2 vols. by the Rev. W. Hett.

*Northern Voyage of Discovery.*—The vessels for exploring the northern regions have begun to be equipped. Two are to endeavour to penetrate through Davis's Straits, and two to reach the North Pole, if possible; by which means it is expected to ascertain whether Greenland is an island, or part of the continents of Asia or America. The vessels are to be stored with every requisite in provisions, nautical instruments, &c. and will also be provided with every appendage used by the Greenland ships: some experienced men in that service are to go in the vessels.

The altitude of remarkable hills in the counties of Middlesex, Kent, Essex, and Surry, (from observations made in the course of the trigonometrical survey, under the direction of the Board of Ordnance,) is given as follows:—Middlesex (above the level of the sea:) Hanger-hill-tower, 251 feet; King's Arbour, 132.—Kent: Allington-knoll, 329; Dover-castle, 469; Goodhurst, 497; Greenwich Observatory, 214; Shooter's-hill, 446; Tenterden-steeple, 322.—Essex: Highbeece, 790; Langdon-hill, 620.—Surry: St. Anne's-hill, 240;

Bagshot Heath, 463 ; Leith-hill, 993 ; Norwood, 389.

According to a recent enumeration of ten years, from 1800 to 1810, the increas-

ed number of houses (in and near the metropolis) is 245,005 ; of which, the augmentation in the suburbs, on the Middlesex side, is 15,131 ; and on the Surry side, 5,638.

## LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

### THEOLOGY.

The Unitarian Refuted, or the Divinity of Christ and the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity plainly proved from copious Texts of Scripture, accompanied with Notes, selected from the New Family Bible ; by the Rev. G. A. Baker, M.A. 8vo. 5s.

The Divine Authority of Holy Scripture asserted, from its Adaptation to the real State of Human Nature : in eight Sermons, preached before the University of Oxford ; by J. Miller, M.A. Fellow of Worcester College.

A Series of Sermons on various Subjects of Doctrine and Practice ; by the Rev. G. Matthew, A. M. 2 vols. 8vo. 17. 1s.

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## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### VALUABLE ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT.

To open an intercourse with the ancient

Church of Abyssinia, in order to revive its primitive intelligence and zeal, was one of the important objects which the Church Missionary Society had in view in estab-



lishing its representatives in the Mediterranean. On Mr. Connor's joining Mr. Jowett, a journey will be undertaken, as soon as practicable, to Egypt; one purpose of which will be, to open, with the aid of the British consul at Caïro, Mr. Salt, and through the patriarch of Alexandria, a communication with Abyssinia.

We extract a passage from the instructions delivered to Mr. Connor, at a special meeting on the 28th of October, which will introduce to our readers the description of a valuable Ethiopic manuscript, lately come into the Society's possession.

Speaking of the Abyssinian Church, it is said—

"That most ancient Christian Church lays a strong claim to our especial regard. Surrounded, and continually encroached on, by Mohammedan zeal, it seems to stretch out its imploring arms for our aid. It possesses the holy Scriptures in an ancient and pure version; but the copies of these Scriptures, in the gradual decay of the church, have become rare, scattered, and mutilated. No object can present itself to the Christian world, of greater interest, or of more probable influence on that whole church and nation, than the communication to them, in rich abundance, of copies of that Divine word which they still reverence and love, but of which there is now among them a grievous deficiency. The good providence of God has lately brought into the Society's possession a MS. of peculiar value. It contains a perfect copy of the first eight books of the Old Testament, in Ethiopic. The Committee have offered to the British and Foreign Bible Society the use of this invaluable MS. in order to print from it an edition of this portion of Scripture; and Mr. Lee has tendered his able services to edit this work. Other portions of the Ethiopic Scriptures are unexpectedly discovering themselves; and, by the blessing of God on your researches through the medium of Egypt, we doubt not but that, at no great distance of time, the Abyssinian Church will be revived and restored by the multiplication of copies of the Divine word."

Mr. Lee, the Orientalist, has given the following statement respecting Ethiopic MSS. in general, and particularly that which is come into the Society's possession.

"It is remarkable," he says, "that notwithstanding the great repute of the Ethiopic Version among the learned in Europe, for more than two hundred years, the far greater part of the Bible has never appeared in print. It is probable, indeed, that Ludolf, the great Ethiopic scholar and grammarian, would have printed many portions, and perhaps the whole of the Old Testament, had sufficient encouragement been afforded him: but, in those times, neither the love of letters, nor the superior desire of giving the waters of life freely, had obtained an ascendancy over the minds of men, sufficient to bring to light so valuable a portion of the sacred Scriptures. Still we are much indebted to Ludolf and his excellent contemporaries, both for the portions of Scripture which they did print, and for the elementary books which they left behind them. Much, however, remains to be done, in this very interesting department of literature; which has now, for more than a hundred years, scarcely been so much as named, much less inquired into."

"The first portions of the Ethiopic Scriptures that appeared in print, were the Psalms, and the Song of Solomon; edited, at Rome, by John Potken, A.D. 1513. In 1548, the New Testament was also printed at Rome, by some Abyssinian priests, and was afterwards reprinted in the London Polyglott; but, as the manuscripts used in the Roman edition were old and mutilated, the editors restored such chasms as appeared in the text, by translation from the Latin Vulgate. These editions, therefore, are not of much value, as they do not present faithful copies of the ancient Ethiopic text. About the middle of the seventeenth century appeared in print, the Book of Ruth; the prophecies of Joel, Jonah, Zephaniah, and Malachi; the song of Moses; that of Hannah (1 Sam. ii.); the prayers of Hezekiah, Manasseh, Jonah, Azariah, and the Three Children; Isaiah; Habakkuk; the hymns of the Virgin Mary, Zachariah, and Simeon; and the first four chapters of Genesis. In 1815, the British and Foreign Bible Society published a reprint of Ludolf's Psalter. This is the whole of the Ethiopic Scriptures hitherto printed. It does not seem necessary here to enumerate all the reprints of the above portions of the Ethiopic Bible."

"By the help of the invaluable MS. which has come into the Society's possession, we hope, through the blessing of God on our endeavours, to add something to the very scanty stock above enumerated; and,

what is far better, to multiply copies of the word of God, for the benefit of the churches in Abyssinia. This MS. contains the first eight books of the Old Testament, written on vellum, in a bold and masterly hand, in two columns on each page. The length of the page is that of a large quarto: the width is not quite so great. The volume contains 285 folios, of which the text covers 282, very accurately written, and in high preservation. On the first page is written, in Ethiopic, the invocation usually found in the books of the eastern Christians: 'In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Then follows an account of the contents of the book, written in Latin by some former possessor, and a date, A. D. 1696. 20 September. On the reverse of the first folio is found a table, not unlike the tables of genealogy in some of our old English Bibles, which seems to be intended to shew the hours appointed for certain prayers. Then follows the Book of Genesis, as translated from the Greek of the Septuagint. On the reverse of the third folio is the following inscription, in Arabic: 'The poor Ribea, the son of Elias, wrote it: O wine! to which nothing can be assimilated, either in reality or appearance; of which our Lord said, having the cup in his hand, and giving thanks, "This is my blood for the salvation of men."' Folios 7 and 8 have been supplied, in paper, by a more modern hand. On the reverse of fol. 8 is a very humble attempt at drawing, in the figure of a person apparently in prayer, accompanied by an inscription, in Ethiopic, at the side of the figure: 'In the prayers of Moses and Aaron, to\* Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, am I, thy servant, O Lord, presented in the power of the Trinity, a weak, infirm, and defiled sinner. Let them implore Christ.' Under the drawing, in Ethiopic: 'In the same manner, every slayer that shall slay Cain, will I repay in this; and, as he slew, so shall he be slain.' On the reverse of fol. 98, at the end of the Book of Exodus, are two figures, somewhat similar, but rather

\* As this inscription, which occurs on the supplied leaves, savours of the errors of the Romish Church, it was probably written by some Abyssinian Catholic. The inscriptions of Isaac, the writer of the MS., though mutilated, and sometimes obscure, seem free from these errors. The figure of St. Peter, mentioned below, was probably traced by the same hand.

better drawn, and seemingly by the writer of the MS.; and, in another place or two, there are marginal ornaments. At the end of Deuteronomy is this inscription in Ethiopic: 'The repetition of the law, which God spake to Moses. Numbered 5070 (words.) Intercede for your slave Isaac.' At the end of the volume: 'Pray for those who laboured in this book; and for your slave Isaac, who gave this to Jerusalem, the holy.' Then follows an inscription, in Arabic: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. O Lord, save thy people from every evil! O our God, Jesus Christ, the Speaker to men! O holy people, remember your slave Isaac, the poor: God shall remember you in the mercies of this book. Pray, if God be willing, that I may be permitted to see your face. And pray for me, the sinner.—Pardon my sins, O Lord! and let my body be buried in Mount Sion.' Then follow other inscriptions in Ethiopic; from which it appears, that the book was written at Axuma, the ancient capital of Ethiopia; and that it was sent by Isaac to the Abyssinians residing in Jerusalem. No date appears in the MS. itself. It is, probably, about 300 years old. On the reverse of fol. 285, is a drawing, intended to represent Andrew the Apostle, with the book of the Gospels in one hand, and the keys in the other. Some less ingenious draftsman, however, has, by means of the transparency of the vellum, traced out this figure on the first page of this folio, and given the name of Peter to his humble representation. He has thus succeeded in assigning to St. Peter the first place, and also in bestowing on him the keys. Against this picture of Peter is placed his age, 120 years."

We trust that, at no distant period, we shall see, by the researches and endeavours of the Church Missionary and Bible Societies, the whole or the greater part of the Ethiopic Scriptures issue from the press. The Church Missionary Society is directing its further inquiries to this end; and Mr. Lee has prepared himself to edit the work: while the British and Foreign Bible Society is taking measures to print it in the most acceptable form.

#### BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

We have before announced the publication of Monthly Extracts by the Bible So-

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ciety. We shall occasionally give some of the most interesting facts.

From the Secretary of the Moscow Bible Society, to the St. Petersburg Bible Society. April, 1817.

"With great anxiety we have watched a fit opportunity of sending off the holy Scriptures to Georgia; and this occasion is now arrived. By means of his excellency Korneif, nineteen chests are to be sent into Georgia, along with a military transport, by way of the Fort of St. Dimitrius. These chests, containing 400 copies of the Georgian New Testament, and 349 Armenian Testaments, are packing up, to be forwarded to Georgia in the same manner by other transports." "The transport of Bibles from your depository has again quickened our operations here. A few days after receiving these Bibles, we succeeded in sending off 300 copies to different provinces, particularly to the Archbishops and Bishops, who still continue to demand great numbers of copies, to supply those of their flocks who are most anxious to obtain them.

"By every post we receive petitions from all parts of the empire, praying to be furnished with the holy Scriptures. The contents of some of these petitions, from the poorest of the people, are so striking and pious, that the reading of them draws tears of compassion from our eyes.

"Our Bible depository is visited every day by people of all classes and denominations. On the day when the transport of Bibles arrived from St. Petersburg, a multitude of people assembled at the depository, desirous of purchasing. The sale did not commence, however, till three days after, when the Bibles left the bookbinder.—That morning, at the break of day, upwards of twenty persons stood before the doors of the depository, which were still shut, patiently waiting to purchase Bibles. Since that period the number of purchasers daily increases."

From his Majesty the King of Denmark, written with his own hand, addressed to his Serene Highness Charles, the Landgrave of Hesse. November 9, 1816.

"The Bible Society, as it is now conducted, is excellent, and deserves all possible encouragement. The reading of the Bible is of the greatest importance in these times, (which present a strange mixture of super-Christ. *Observ.* No. 193.

stitution and infidelity,) and deserves the utmost attention from every government."

From Alfred Hennen, Esq. Secretary to the Louisiana Bible Society. New Orleans, February, 22, 1817.

"The first 1000 Spanish New Testaments were just distributed as the second donation arrived. Within the last two months, I have had numerous applications from Spanish captains of vessels, crews, and others, for the Testament; a few copies of which have been taken by almost every vessel that has sailed for a Spanish port. From frequent inquiries, I believe the Spaniards are much pleased with reading the Testaments; but they very often inquire, if the whole of the Bible will not be printed and circulated among them; and express a wish to have the Old as well as the New Testament."

Official accounts have been received of the establishment of a Bible Society at Malta, of which the Rev. W. Jowett, the Rev. Mr. Lowndes, and Dr. Cleardo Naudi, are secretaries. The committee, consisting of members of the British, Greek, and Maltese nations, held their first meeting on the 27th of May, 1817. Five hundred pounds have been granted in aid of the funds of this important institution.

From the Second Report of the Swedish Bible Society.

"Your Committee have been enabled to publish 13,000 complete Bibles, and 8000 New Testaments; most assuredly the greatest number of copies of the Scriptures ever issued from the Swedish press in one year. The total published (commencing with those of the Evangelical Society) amounts to 73,600 New Testaments, and 31,500 Bibles; besides 3000 copies of David's Psalms, all which (with the exception of 5000 Bibles, and 3000 New Testaments) are already in the hands of the public."

From a Roman Catholic Clergyman on the Continent.

"I am occupied both day and night; feeling no disposition in this time of difficulty to relax my efforts, but, on the contrary, a resolution to apply my utmost strength to this divine work. The injurious opposition given to it has required, and still requires, my most close and unceasing attention. Indeed, but for the sufficiency

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of the grace of God supporting me, it must have exhausted my strength. The powers of darkness are spreading their murky wings, to stop the breaking forth of the light of the Gospel, now so happily evident in all parts. But neither this, nor any other thing they can do, makes me afraid : on the contrary, I arm myself with double activity to distribute the New Testament, and am resolved that the wheels shall go round the faster for their obstructions."

From the Rev. Robert Morrison, Canton, China, Feb. 24, 1817.

"I have acknowledged the receipt of the last grant of the British and Foreign Bible

Society, to me, for the purpose of translating, printing, and distributing the sacred Scriptures in Chinese. An edition of 9000 copies is about to be struck off at Malacca, in consequence of its being thought imprudent to do it here. I have desired Mr. Milne to print, together with the New Testament, an edition of the Book of Genesis ; and I think it is likely that he will print some copies of the Book of Deuteronomy, which he has himself translated. Should I not remove thither myself, I purpose to send down the Book of Psalms at the close of the year."

## VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

### UNITED STATES.

The Message of the President to both houses of Congress congratulates them on the happy and prosperous state of the country, which in every point of view he considers as hitherto unequalled. Abundance, increased commerce, and a corresponding increase of revenue and public credit, are particularly mentioned. Two or three subjects of discussion between the United States and Great Britain had been amicably adjusted. The strictest neutrality was to be observed in the affairs of South America ; and the most friendly arrangements continued to exist with the different European powers. The militia force of the several States amounted to about 80,000 men. The payments into the treasury for the year, on account of imposts and tonnage, are estimated at 20,000,000 of dollars ; the

internal revenues at 2,500,000 ; public lands at 1,500,000 ; and bank dividends and incidental receipts at 500,000 ; making in the whole 24,500,000 dollars. The permanent annual expenditure for the army, navy, and civil government amounts to 11,800,000, and the sinking fund to 10,000,000 ; thus leaving an estimated excess of revenue above the expenditure of 2,700,000 dollars. Under these favourable circumstances, the President recommends the repeal of internal taxes. We certainly have no jealous feelings that can prevent our sincerely congratulating the United States on this favourable state of things ; and we trust that both Great Britain and America may long retain those amicable relations which will prevent the prosperity of either becoming a source of injury or annoyance, but rather of benefit, to the other.

### GREAT BRITAIN.

Parliament was opened, January 27th, with the following Speech delivered by Commission in the name of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

"My Lords, and Gentlemen—

"We are commanded by his Royal Highness the Prince Regent to inform you, that it is with great concern that he is obliged to announce to you the continuance of his Majesty's lamented indisposition.

"The Prince Regent is persuaded that you will deeply participate in the affliction with which his Royal Highness has been

visited, by the calamitous and untimely death of his beloved and only child the Princess Charlotte.

"Under this awful dispensation of Providence, it has been a soothing consolation to the Prince Regent's heart, to receive from all descriptions of his Majesty's subjects the most cordial assurances both of their just sense of the loss which they have sustained, and of their sympathy with his parental sorrow : and, amidst his own sufferings, his Royal Highness has not been unmindful of the effect which this sad event must have on the interests and future prospects of the kingdom.



"We are commanded to acquaint you, that the Prince Regent continues to receive from foreign powers the strongest assurances of their friendly disposition towards this country, and of their desire to maintain the general tranquillity.

"His Royal Highness has the satisfaction of being able to assure you, that the confidence which he has invariably felt in the stability of the great sources of our national prosperity has not been disappointed.

"The improvement which has taken place in the course of the last year, in almost every branch of our domestic industry, and the present state of public credit, afford abundant proof that the difficulties under which the country was labouring were chiefly to be ascribed to temporary causes.

"So important a change could not fail to withdraw from the disaffected, the principal means of which they had availed themselves for the purpose of fomenting a spirit of discontent, which unhappily led to acts of insurrection and treason : and his Royal Highness entertains the most confident expectation, that the state of peace and tranquillity to which the country is now restored, will be maintained against all attempts to disturb it, by the persevering vigilance of the magistracy, and by the loyalty and good sense of the people.

"Gentlemen of the House of Commons—

"His Royal Highness recommends to your continued attention the state of the public income and expenditure of the country ; and he is most happy in being able to acquaint you, that, since you were last assembled in parliament, the revenue has been in a state of progressive improvement in its most important branches.

"My Lords and Gentlemen—

"We are commanded by the Prince Regent to inform you, that he has concluded treaties with the courts of Spain and Portugal, on the important subject of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

"The Prince Regent has commanded us to direct your particular attention to the deficiency which has so long existed in the number of places of public worship belonging to the Established Church, when compared with the increased and increasing population of the country.

"His Royal Highness most earnestly recommends this important subject to your early consideration, deeply impressed, as he has no doubt you are, with a just sense of the many blessings which this country, by the favour of Divine Providence, has enjoyed ; and with the conviction that the religious and moral habits of the people are the most sure and firm foundation of national prosperity."

This Speech affords fewer subjects of remark than some of those to which we have been lately accustomed. No brilliant exploits are recorded, and the public attention has not been very actively excited ; yet the whole is doubtless, favourable and cheering, and, we imagine, quite consistent with the existing state of things. Passing by the two mournful topics which open the Speech, we feel much pleasure in congratulating our readers on the state of our connexion with foreign powers, and the visible improvement in our domestic circumstances. The tranquillity of the country has induced ministers not only to liberate the state prisoners, but to recommend to Parliament the immediate repeal of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act. We rejoice to find them the first to propose the repeal of a measure, which, though deemed of absolute necessity for the general safety, during the late feverish state of the country, is now no longer requisite ; and which certainly ought not to be persevered in one moment beyond the necessity that gave it birth.

The treaties mentioned in the Speech with Spain and Portugal, relative to the Slave Trade, we propose to notice more fully hereafter. For the present, we only state, that Spain has abolished, under severe penalties, the purchase of slaves north of the Line, from December 1817 ; and the trade universally from May 1820.

The last measure alluded to in the Speech is one of the highest importance to the future moral, religious, and political welfare of the country, and to which we are glad to find the attention of Parliament at length directed from the throne itself. It would be premature to say any thing on the subject, till the outline of the measures to be proposed is before the public.

An Address, as usual an echo of the Speech, was likely to be voted in both houses without opposition. May this peaceable commencement of the session be the prelude to a general unanimity and co-operation on all the great topics in which the welfare of the nation is concerned !

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

5:11 and AN ENQUIRER are received.

JUSTITIA will appear.

A.; BIBLIOPHILUS; H. Z.; MODERATOR; Φίλαυρος; T. K.; THEOGNIS; AGRIPPA; A LOYAL CHURCHMAN; *Letter from a Clergyman in Ireland*; and an *Essay on Prophecy*, are under consideration.

The papers of Q. D. are left, addressed as he desires, at our Publisher's.

Both N. H. and EDINENSIS complain that the receipt of their communications was not acknowledged. The latter was noticed last month, before the receipt of his letter, and as soon as his papers came into our hands; and the former as long ago as last July. Correspondents should keep a better look-out. Their communications, if sent in reasonable time in the month, are always acknowledged in the *next* Number, unless of a nature to demand further inquiry before any reply can be given.

We have received a letter from Mr. James Farquhar Gordon, the Secretary of the Deaf and Dumb Institution of Edinburgh, complaining of a misrepresentation in our last Number (p. 822,) respecting the refusal which they gave to the application of the Rev. Mr. Gallaudet for instruction in the art of teaching the deaf and dumb. He says they would have been glad to give Mr. Gallaudet the desired information; but that when, in 1811, their present teacher was sent to London to acquire the necessary qualifications for instructing their pupils, they found themselves under the necessity of either abandoning the seminary altogether, or engaging under a penalty of 1000*l.* that their teacher should not, for seven years from that date, communicate the art of instructing the deaf and dumb to any other person. Their refusal of Mr. Gallaudet's application was therefore unavoidable: they were under the necessity of refusing him—a circumstance which they deeply regretted.—We very readily admit that this explanation serves most completely to exculpate the Edinburgh Institution; but it seems to throw the task of explaining the causes of this apparently illiberal restriction on that in London. We beg to assure the benevolent Secretary, that we have much pleasure in correcting this mistake respecting the Edinburgh Institution; and if we have not noticed their reports in the same manner in which we have noticed that of the Connecticut Institution, it is because we have never seen them. They have never been sent to us.

We have also received a communication from Dr. Watson, the Teacher of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum in London, disclaiming the illiberality he conceives to be imputed to him by the article in our last Number. We certainly shall be most happy to assist in removing that imputation. We willingly give place, therefore, to the Resolution adopted by the Auditors of that Institution, in concurrence with Dr. Watson, and afterwards confirmed by the Committee, on the subject of Mr. Gallaudet's application to them for instruction. It is as follows:—"Resolved, that, after mature deliberation, taking in view the due discipline of the Asylum and the proper time requisite to qualify an effective instructor of the deaf and dumb, the Auditors, in conjunction with Dr. Watson, beg to recommend to the Committee to allow Mr. Gallaudet to be received into the Asylum for one month on liking, with the view that on the expiration of that period he shall be engaged as an assistant for three years, *on the usual terms*, with power to Dr. Watson to release him from his engagement sooner, if it should appear that Mr. Gallaudet is qualified before the end of that time."—Now what the usual terms are, whether onerous or otherwise, does not appear; but they evidently were thought so by Mr. Gallaudet; who probably, also, would object to putting it in the power of another to retain him in a state of pupilage for three years, when he apprehended that a few months might be sufficient to acquire the art he sought. And in point of fact he acquired, without terms or conditions, in France, in three or four months, the knowledge requisite for the efficient conduct of the proposed establishment.